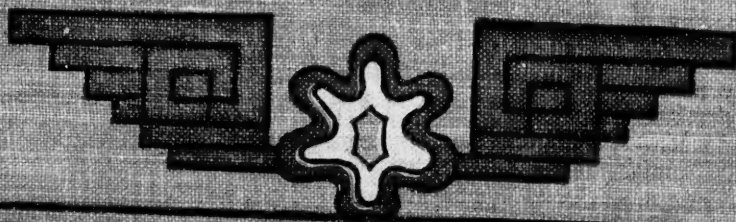


THE WHITE KING
OF MANOA

JOSEPH HATTON



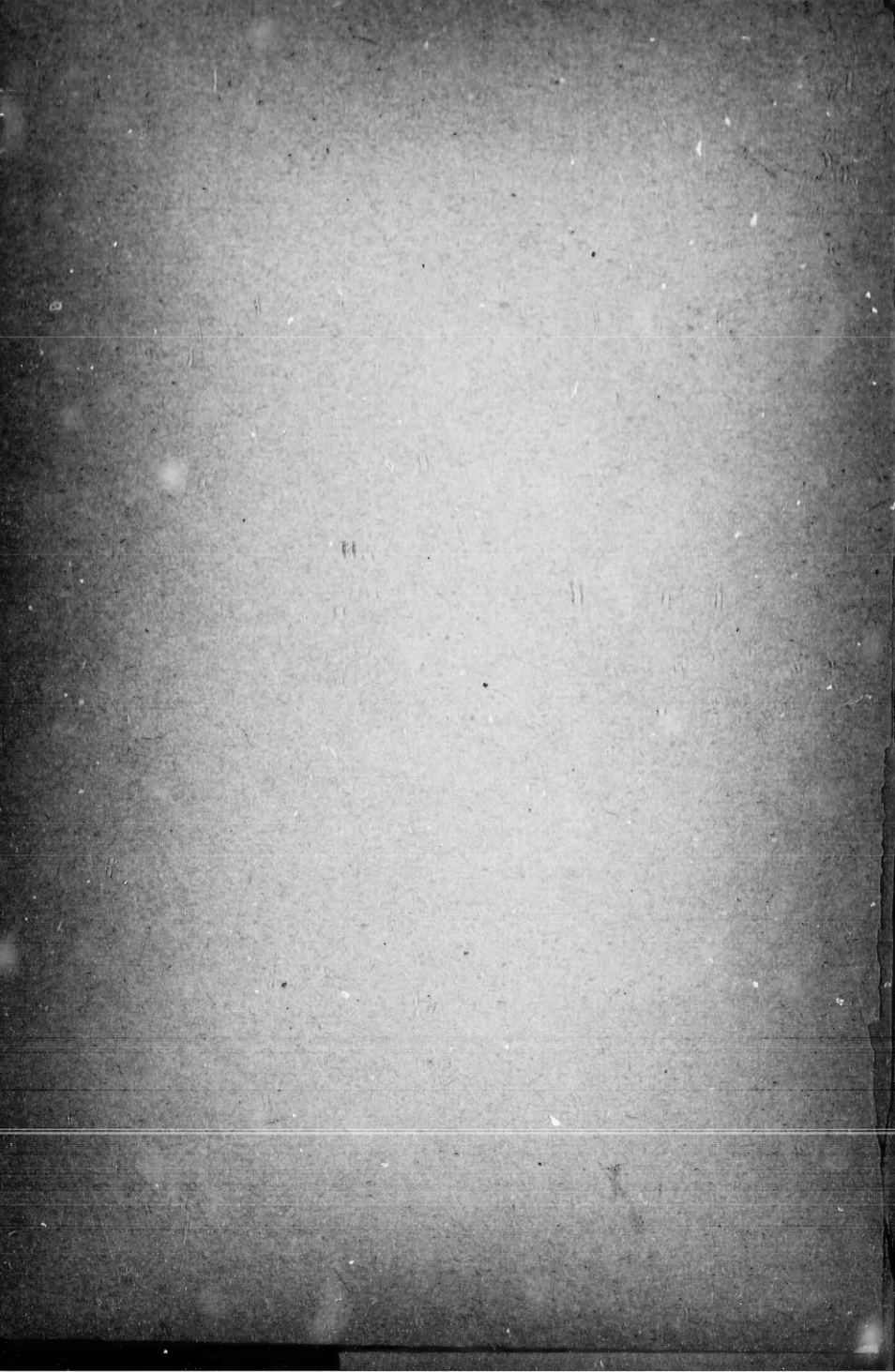
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THE WHITE KING OF MANOA



THE WHITE KING OF MANOA

BY

JOSEPH HATTON

Author of

"The Dagger and the Cross," "By Order of the Czar," "An Exile's Daughter," etc.



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The White King of Manoa

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"There is a history in all men's lives,
Figuring the nature of the times deceased;
The which observ'd, a man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the chance of things
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
And weak beginnings lie intresured."

SHAKESPEARE.



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PRELUDE



ENGLAND'S GREAT AWAKENING

It was an age of great ambitions, a spreading of sails for unknown seas. According to Sidmouth Trevelion, the spirit of God once more moved upon the face of the waters. It had become necessary for a repetition of the Divine command, "Let there be light." But the light was dimmed, at intervals, by a Satanic influence, "ordained," however, Master Trevelion declared, only "to try the national faith, and make it strong." In his estimation the devil was King Philip of Spain, and the Almighty's representative was Queen Elizabeth of England.

Master Sidmouth Trevelion, the mariner-preacher of Exmouth, was not alone in this belief; and those who reverently follow the Almighty's government of a troublesome planet may observe, in Elizabeth's selection of her counsellors, the Hand of God Himself. If the devil was permitted to inspire an ungrateful disregard of their conspicuous virtues on earth, it is conceivable that they were amply rewarded in heaven.

From John O'Groats to the Land's End men arose from their beds at dawn with a fresh and absorbing interest in life. Reports of maritime adventure were on every lip. Bristol had snatched from Seville a share of the honours of Spain. Bideford, Falmouth, Dartmouth, Exmouth

Prelude

had met the Don upon the seas, and towed his ships into English harbours, to the jubilant music of tabor, drum, trumpet, and hautboy.

The curtains of a New World had been raised, but the disclosure was as yet only vague and misty. Little more than the fact of the curtains themselves had been revealed, and the great beyond stimulated the sluggish fancy of the commonest individual. A new inspiration filled the poet's soul with transcendent thoughts. Behind the impulse of exploration came the push of knowledge, striding out of the darkness of the ages. The very heart and soul of things began to be made manifest. Furthermore, patriotism and adventure were swayed by the new-born literature of history and imagination. The world was awakening from a long sleep. A universal yearning to explore new lands and sail upon unknown seas was intensified by the deep sense of freedom that the Reformation had added to a thirst for knowledge, the longing for elbow-room, the prisoner's desire for action who has just been relieved of his chains. Whether the new sovereignty of Order was a blessed return to the primitive forms of doctrine, or the victory of Progress and Protestantism over the tyranny of the Papacy, mattered not ; it breathed new life into the lungs of the nation, though it hardened the heart of the Spanish king and thus stained the pages of history with its bloodiest and most brutal chapters.

In England it was the West that caught the earliest impact of the great awakening. On the return of the Cabots from the newly discovered island, they visited London, walked in the Strand, traversed the busy promenade of St. Paul's, and lounged through Westminster, rich in velvets and fine linen, and girt with diamond-hilted swords, cheered by crowds of admiring citizens. Sir Humphrey Gilbert had crossed the Atlantic in their wake and won for England her first colony, the much-abused but loyal Newfoundland. Our troops were winning victories for Protestantism in the Netherlands, at terrible cost, but with conspicuous honour. The tracks of the nation's sacrifices were marked by valiant deaths and noble. Sir Philip Sidney had closed his chivalrous career on

the battle-field at Zutphen: and Raleigh, now a foremost figure in the realm, had sung his requiem in pathetic verse. It was also given to the same loyal pen to write the truth about the fight of Sir Richard Grenville and his *Revenge* against a Spanish Armada at the Azores.

In Devon they were wont to say that one Western man could fight three Easterlings, which argued that two could beat six Spaniards; and they forthwith tackled armies with regiments and fleets with single ships. That they were defeated now and then only made them more persistent in their ventures, though they knew that falling into the hands of their Spanish foes and rivals meant chains, dungeons, torture, and not infrequently death, most hideous and profane. No savages known to history were so skilled in subtle and long-drawn-out tortures as the officers and executioners of the Holy Inquisition. But when did flame and steel, rack, thumb-screw, or faggot intimidate brave men—or women either?

They would not have been human if, in addition to the burning desire for adventure and to be "first foot" in new worlds, the greed of gold had not also moved men to deeds of daring. For, if it was an age of piety and self-sacrifice, of loyalty and enterprise and learning beyond any other, it was also one of unusual ostentation and display. Raleigh was typical of the recklessness with which men acquired riches and an example of lavish expenditure. The Queen had a passion for fine clothes and rich jewels, for pageantry and high living; and she exacted, with close-fisted rigour, her full share of Spanish plunder. With the fever of nationalism arose a universal desire to seek revenge for Spanish cruelties and affronts, not alone in the capture of her ships, but to win from her the mysterious sources of her treasure, in which, it was argued, lay her world-wide power. Then came about all kinds of wonderful tales of the riches of the Indies, the alluvial soil of Guiana, and the untold wealth of Manoa, the Spaniards' vaunted El Dorado. Every ship that sailed brought home its fairy tales of gold and precious stones. Men talked of little else but how to

Prelude

find a way to the treasure-houses of the Southern seas. True patriots, and servants of God, had to use such human material as they could recruit to man their ships, and the most pious of captains, the most unselfish of capitalists had frequently to be content with crews of rogues and vagabonds, some who had never sailed the seas, others equally ignorant of military duties. It is only common justice to their memories to record that when the pinch of conflict came they mostly proved themselves to be brave and sturdy—such, one must add, as survived the ordinary perils of the seas. In those days it was severely “the survival of the fittest.” The survivors were men of surpassing strength and unwearying effort.

At the historic moment of the following romance the Armada had been crushed between the English guns and the mightier winds; but the vitality of Spain was only checked. New and still mightier ships were being built to humble the defiant islanders, who have never yet been humbled except when they have proved untrue to each other, as will, alas, happen in family quarrels. White-winged messengers, whose only search-lights were their eager eyes, brought from time to time the fateful news of impending war; and all the land was busy with enterprises of great pith and moment. The people were not so united in their loyalty to the Queen and government that in case of disaster they might safely be counted upon to stand by the one or the other. They were all for building up an Empire beyond the seas, but the fires of Smithfield had embittered the religious animosities of both Catholics and Puritans. Spain had secret emissaries in London, spies in every port, and, on religious grounds, not a few sympathisers in the counties. Added to these anxieties the jealous rivalries for individual influence, among the Queen's ministers, and the eccentric discipline of the Court agitated official London and excited the national pulse to a feverish heat that made for both good and evil impulses. Happily, nothing daunted the patriotic ambitions of the illustrious statesmen, warriors and

pioneers who died for their country, martyrs to ingratitude and base injustice on Tower Hill, or fighting the nation's battles beyond the seas.

What a time to have lived in ! Apart from its graver background of mighty purposes, tempered by the rising sun of Poetry, one envies its picturesqueness, its gay apparel, its rich brocades, its flaunting feathers, its ruffs and buckles, its gemmed laces, its pert and coquettish maidens, its farthingaled dames with crutch-sticks, its quaint chariots and sedan-chairs, its gabled houses and diamond window-panes ; its legends of the deep, its strange tales of new-found seas, its belief in fairies and witches, and everything that goes to the very heart of romance. There is no necessity to discount it, with fevers and plagues, and cobbled streets and streets devoid of cobbles, its open drains, its filthy gutters, its rush-strewn floors—harbourage for vermin and worse—and all the other blemishes of the times, unknown as disabilities then, but regarded with a shudder now ; though the darker corners of Europe are still reminiscent of the prehistoric days of sanitary science. Of the heroic and picturesque side of the Tudor period you may find relics and landmarks in the Devonian ports, notably at Dartmouth and Bideford ; and the home of the Raleighs still remains, an example of domestic architecture of the period and a monument alike to English glory and ingratitude.

Rambling through the green lanes of Devon, with his dreams of love and adventure, or listening to sailors' yarns down by the yellow beach, David Yarcombe, the hero of this history, had ample material for thought. He had heard again and again of Columbus and the Cabots and strange stories of the Spanish conquests of Mexico and Peru. Later and better still he had become acquainted with the adventures of Drake and Frobisher, of Grenville and Hawkins, and the romantic exploits of one who had lived when a lad within a mile or two of David's own home, and who had risen from a no better estate to the splendid honour of knighthood and the friendship of

Prelude

his Queen. David had often felt the force of this and other kindred examples to seek his fortune with his fellow countrymen in the Southern seas ; but he argued with himself that none of them had half his reason for staying at home. Patriotism is a mighty power, but love is stronger than death.

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Book I

ON THE EXE

CHAPTER I

"ALAS! THE LOVE OF WOMEN"

NOW David Yarcombe was a ne'er-do-well. The type is universal, and everlasting. Like love, it belongs to no age. Like hate, it is of no country. But in all ages, in all times, it has been the pioneer of great discoveries.

The troubadour of Provence was a ne'er-do-well. The knights of chivalry were his kin. Many a poet who sings through the centuries was of the same kidney. Shakespeare was a ne'er-do-well. On land and sea, in arms and song, painter, poet, novelist, the ne'er-do-well has carved his name high on Mount Parnassus; and as pioneer and maker of the British Empire has whitened every continent with his bones. To-day he is clearing the way for the empire of Christianity and labour across the Dark Continent, from the Cape to Cairo; and his name shall live in story and in song, and his deeds in the history of the world.

David Yarcombe was a dreamer of dreams, a student of the stars, a dabbler in alchymy. He was a master of other men's adventures, fought their battles over again in their chronicles by the winter fire, read Latin almost as well as

his own tongue, knew something of Greek, spoke French ; yet was only twenty-three, and had had no other schooling than that of the dominie's, at which Walter Raleigh had been birched and had retaliated with a box on old dominie's ears.

The Rev. Rollit Goodenough, the local parson, an adept in the classics, had assisted David, it is true, in certain of his studies ; and his ambition may have been stimulated by the fact that at school he had sat in the seat where Raleigh had sat, and used the desk on which Raleigh had carved his initials. Walter, now a courtier and captain of the Queen's guard, was the model for the youth of the South Devon coast ; and, though news of the world of London was scarce thereabouts, there was always plenty to be heard of Sir Walter Raleigh.

Nevertheless, with such an example ever before him, David could do nothing that his father considered useful. In such leisure as he permitted himself from his indoor studies, David would take his lute to the home of Lucy Withycombe, and beguile the time with song and story. Although Dame Withycombe did not favour his suit, she avowed the young imp had fascinating ways and sung a ballad with the voice of an angel and the manner of a stalwart soldier ; but, were she a lass, Anthony Kennock was the man for her money ; at which David would change his note, whereupon Lucy would slip her hand into his and his good spirits would come back to him.

When he was not making sweet music for Lucy at Littleham, he would be sailing his boat along the coast, or having her moored at Dartmouth quay while he talked with the mariners there. He also made holiday trips to the picturesque little town of Bideford, where he had once met Francis Drake and heard one of his soul-stirring revelations of battle, murder, and sudden death, not to mention the treasures that he had brought home, and how

that almost every member of the crew on his latest voyage had become a rich man. On other occasions he would stalk the stag on Dartmoor, riding thither on a favourite mare that he steered as firmly and as free as he piloted his well-known little craft, something between a catboat and a lugger, which answered her helm as sharply as Master Sidmouth Trevelion answered the jibe of an enemy. He would take extraordinary pains to verify as far as possible from the personal experience of Western voyagers the records of his books of travel, listening with flushed cheek to the narratives of his fellow-countrymen who had left companions, to be rescued at some future day, in Spanish dungeons, and others to find comparatively happy deaths in the deep sea.

While they made men's flesh creep with their stories of the cruelties of Spain, they would thrill them with accounts of British victories over the enemy at mighty odds, and make their fingers itch to clutch the treasures of gold and pearls and every kind of precious stone, that lay ready for such as were bold enough to seek them sword in hand. Then they would hint at islands of silver and gold that still lay hidden, only awaiting the new discoverers. Not one island alone, rich with vine and palm, and pomegranate and nuts, and flowers to the water's edge, but hundreds were scattered through the newly discovered seas, as rich in precious metals inland as they were beautiful along their coasts with vegetation, and in their yellow sands, with turtles, shell-fish, and everything to make life easy and work a mere game of bowls or leapfrog. Many of these tales were recruiting stories, but they were strangely verified by examples of the treasures that had been won on sea and land.

Nevertheless David Yarcombe remained at home, on the old farm; "eating the bread of idleness, a ne'er-do-well" his father would say, with a touch of bitterness,

"disregarding his heirship to a decent estate, and equally unmoved by the patriotism that took regard for the honour and glory of his country." . . . David shrugged his shoulders and strode over the hill to Littleham, or sailed his boat to Topsham or let her tear along the new water-way to Exeter if the wind favoured; and there he would wander into the cathedral and listen to the choir, and lodge himself at night in some old tavern. In other moods he would offer affectionate apologies to his father, and at night with some familiar ballad charm the old man's fancy back to the happy time when his wife sat by the fire, and worked her sampler and chatted of the day's doings. Then the old man would soften to his son, whom in his heart he loved and admired, and kiss him on the forehead "A happy good-night"; and David would steal to his own room and light his lamp, and spend half the night with books of travel and philosophy, to dream himself during the other half into a hero such as Raleigh or Drake, or dear old Sidmouth Trevelion. . . . Jim Carew, Master Trevelion's right hand, a worldly fellow but true, had tempted David with romances of lands where winter was unknown, and where a man might have as many wives as he listed, dusky maybe, but not more so than some of Devon's sunburnt faces, and of rare figures, hair that wrapped them about like a garment, teeth like pearls, and lips that shamed the cherry; but Jim's beauties, nor spices and gems and glory to boot, never pulled at David's heart-strings as did Lucy Withycombe, whose arms were softer than summer tides, her lips sweeter than all the luscious fruits that Jim Carew described as falling into English mariners' mouths in the wild orchards of the Southern seas.

And Lucy Withycombe was made to drive men mad. She quite understood how lovely she was without betraying in her manner the smallest taint of self-consciousness—a charm few beautiful women possess. Her glass told her

what she read in the eyes of the men of the county round about. At church the youths of the congregation divided their attention between her and their prayer-books. Old men sighed that their days were over, and everybody envied David Yarcombe. Yet any aspirant to Lucy's hand might claim to have a chance of success, seeing that at present, if David was an accepted wooer, his suit had not been ratified by Lucy's father. Had not the old man been under the authoritative thumb of his wife, David and Lucy might, perchance, have been married. Not that the girl had sufficiently encouraged David's aspirations to permit of a discussion of wedded life. For Lucy was even more ambitious than David.

She was the cousin of Bessie Throckmorton, who had been appointed maid of honour to the Queen and had rapidly become a great favourite with Her Majesty. The two girls had not often met, but on their very earliest acquaintance, had sworn eternal friendship. When Bessie was informed of the probability of the royal favour being extended to her, she had at once vowed to Lucy that her first desire would be to have Lucy accompany her to London as her friend and companion. Although Lucy's hope had not been fulfilled to this extent the Queen's maid of honour had availed herself of almost every favourable opportunity to send her letters and beg for an exchange of confidences by the same medium: quite a formidable business in those days, when letters were mostly delivered at great cost by relays of men and horses maintained by the Government and primarily intended for its service. Between London and the western ports, private correspondence would be chiefly conducted through friendly and confidential messengers whose business of the seas took them to and fro; and the Queen's maid of honour was particular in choosing such safe mediums, though she was not equally discreet in what she wrote. There was less danger from any one

opening her elaborately sealed missives, than in the recipient being able to keep faith with Bessie's injunctions of secrecy.

Looking over the letters which statesmen and others, placed high at Court and in diplomacy, ventured to write to each other, often at risk of their heads (one betraying the other as sometimes occurred), it is not a matter for wonderment that Bessie Throckmorton confided to the trusted friend of her girlhood and her "dearest coz" secrets that Lucy would be delighted to share. . . . Bessie was not as learned as some other ladies of what in later days would have been called a "blue stocking" Court, which seems to have induced some historians to print more than one of Mistress Throckmorton's letters in their original and faulty spelling. In this present mirror of the times the spirit of them, rather than their dry technicalities, is interpreted. Better suffer critical rebuke for a non-archaic treatment of the orthography of the Tudor period than wear out the patience of the reader. The author who explains that he prefers only to suggest the mode of speech belonging to the period of his narrative, instead of interlarding his dialogue with an obsolete phraseology, rarely protects himself from the shafts of the stickler for the peculiar vocabulary of a period in all its archaism; but there is "a mean in all things" as Dryden insists, the which shall guide us in transcribing Bessie Throckmorton's last letter to her "sweet and dearest coz" at Littleham. . . .

"This," she wrote, "by my most trusty friend, Master John Oxenham, who, voyaging from the port of London to Dartmouth, doth undertake its delivery; else dared I scarce trust the further secrets it shall unfold, my heart yeraning to answer all thy questiones and atte the same time to disburden myselffe of some littel of its joyes, and alsoe its doubttes and feares. When you shall have read the same in thine closet, loving coz, shalt burn the fond record, and no answer make thereto, but prepare you to lern further

when we shall meet, perchance at Littleham, or at the Palace of Whitehall, where I shall have the privilege to receive thee, soe it shall chance your good father and mother permit. I need your sweet and wise companionship, a faithfulle friend who hath no sophistries of Courts, for although Her Majesty hath shown me much favour, yet I do fear me that when happiness is most keen and content most joyfulle the clouds be coming. Hold thy sweet breathe and shut thy doors that e'en the roses at thy window catch no suspicion of whatte I saye; the love of a Queen and such an one as ye wott of, be no less of danger than the jealousy thereof, and there is no gentleman at Court, soe manly, brave and true, and of such goodly presence as my lord; but 'tis a crime in her sight that any love but hers be endured, and my heart consumes with its secret, until I give it life in thy dear bosom. Never was woman more to be envied or pittied than I, whose ambition contends with her love, and whose love hath lain low her ambition except in its desire to have thee knowe all, and when we doe share sweet companionship, then shalt thou tell me of Master Yarcombe and thy persecutor, one Kennock, and of the pleasant evenings of musick and song, though my woman's instinct doth gather that there are degrees of love and that mine for my dear W—— R——, is of a higher heat than thine for David, who hath so devoted a passion for his most sweet Lucy that it holds his manly aspirations in check; soe I conclude with every dear message of Affection; and be ready when I doe send messenges for thy safe conveyance from Littleham, or peradventure doe come myself accompaied by my brother Arthur to bring thee hither. But that my love is near by while I pen these words, I could envy you your home so near Hayes Barton where he did spend his youth and dream of love, as he doth confess, never hoping so much as to have it so well satisfied in, Thine most dear coz,

BESSIE THROCKMORTON."

David had observed a change in Lucy, of late, that puzzled him. She had suddenly become absent-minded, except that he thought she glanced more frequently than was her habit at the tiny mirror that hung by the mantel between a brace of miniatures; the one of her cousin, Mistress Bessie Throckmorton, and the other of her mother when a girl. Lucy became absorbed in thoughts she did not share with him. It was evidently with an effort that she sat quietly while he sang the favourite song of Queen Elizabeth's illustrious father, "The Hunt is up;" and whereas her voice was wont to lead the chorus, in which her father and mother, and a chance neighbour happening in, would join as they sat round the table in the candle-light, it now lacked tone and timbre, and her eyes wandered from the music, though David as plainly as ever signified that it was to her his merry appeal was made:

"The hunt is up, the hunt is up;
Awake, my lady sweet;
I come to thy bower, at this lov'd hour,
My own true love to greet."

They had a very pleasant habit of song in those days. The madrigal was a popular form of vocal recreation, the lute an instrument not considered beneath the handling of the soldier or the statesman. The Queen played on the virginals. Her subjects sang songs and pieces writ for several voices in their own homes, and there were dancings and merry-makings in which all could take part; and David Yarcombe thought Lucy had the sweetest voice that ever sang to the accompaniment of lute or virginals. To hear it halting and out of tune was an alarming experience. The truth is Lucy was in possession of her first secret, and it embarrassed her sorely. Furthermore, a new song was making strange music in her heart. David's tales of love and adventure, of courts and cavaliers, his ballads and the

romances of the time had made her mind as tinder to receive Bessie's epistolary spark from the Court. For the moment the blaze consumed the smouldering fires of love that David sought to fan into flame with tender words and the insinuating music of his lute. And he had good ground for the belief that he had succeeded; though Lucy's mother insisted that, her father being poor and David a doubtful heir to his father's estate, it was but ordinary prudence not to shackle the girl by betrothal, and certainly not by marriage, unblessed by parents and unendowed by the bridegroom, who "toiled not, neither did he spin," to any advantage of worldly profit.

Naturally David became jealous. It must be that Master Anthony Kennock had thriven somewhat in Lucy's estimation. When he hinted as much she laughed, and plagued him with pretty protests against his want of respect for her. She knew he loved her, she said, and she had hitherto believed he esteemed her as one having a decent pride and self-esteem. . . . "Anthony Kennock!" she exclaimed, "a thing, a patch, a creature that comes from nobody knows where and lives nobody knows how, and whom Master Sidmouth Trevelion has called a spy and a Papist to his ugly face! Nay, David, an I would not my bitterest enemy had thought so meanly of me." At which David humbled himself in the dust and denounced himself as a villain and unworthy of her, and swore he would do heaven only knows what; for he was beside himself. . . .

Presently, when he was once more sitting by her side, he tried to justify himself a little, by recalling the declaration of her mother that, if she were a girl, Anthony Kennock was the man for her money.

"But you know my mother hath a weakness for pearls and chains and the like, and this man Kennock seems to have a plentiful supply of such store; and finding out, by subtle questioning, mother's natal day, did send her 'a

neighbourly token,' so he named it, of the time, and with such fine words and poetic sauce that he has won his way to her best opinion. . . . But oh! David, I am sore perplexed this day; would I might share with you a secret that burns my very lips."

"Nay, let me snatch it thus," David replied, suddenly clasping her in his arms.

"'Tis not my own secret," she said, when she had breath enough left to speak, "and it must be kept for a little while, at least; but when I may divulge it you shall be my first confidant."

"In the meantime?" he said, watching the animated play of her countenance.

"Why, be content with this avowal: the secret lies enshrined in a letter that hath come from town."

"From Mistress Throckmorton?" he exclaimed, interrupting her.

"Nay, I may not say—at present. But oh, it is hard to keep it back!"

CHAPTER II

HOW ANTHONY KENNOCK CAME TO EXMOUTH

"A STRANGE customer!" Captain Liberty Dent would exclaim, with a far-away look in his grey eyes. "I should think he were indeed, and if he don't come to a strange end, there bain't no readin' of faces. The way he come to Exmouth was like a thief in the night; not as I would make disparagement of the man, though I hates un. It was nigh upon dawn. I was watchin' a ship as was just a-dousin' her glim, in token of the first beams of the sun, when I see a boat, well manned, rounding the buoy off the Warren, makin' for the barque and flyin' the English flag. Turnin' my glass to the steps by the Mermaid, I see a bedizened stranger and Master Hiliary Sharp, the landlord, a-tuggin' at a gert chest. So I goes down to the quay, and there was Hiliary Sharp and his lads and women bustlin' to get breakfast ready, and starin' between whiles at the stranger in blue satin and brocaded Spanish cloak and a hat with a gert bunch of feathers, his beard pointed, gold chains about his neck, and a Toledo blade on his hip, for all the world like a hidalgo of Spain, and givin' mun the airs and graces of a grandee such as one might see at the Court of our glorious Elizabeth; and he was talkin' of adventures he'd had with Captain Hawkins, and namin' Francis Drake and John Oxenham as boe companions; and somehow I took a hatred of mun, and always shall. And that's how Anthony Kennock, his hide-bound

coffer, and his other strange belongings come to Exmouth, callin' Squire Blatchford his friend, by which token he might also have named the devil as his blood relation."

That was how Captain Liberty Dent told the story of the advent of Anthony Kennoek; rarely in fewer words, never in more, but always with a far-away look, as if there was something in the background of his brief narrative that might some day be revealed to him.

It had been less than a month previously that there had arrived at the Manor House Master Blatchford's nephew. Now Master Blatchford was a Justice of the Peace. He had accepted the new dispensation with coldness, but without protest, and had professed to be obedient to the law, signifying that he was Her Majesty's faithful subject, and conscious of his bounden duty to the State. Many a Papist submitted with a show of grace, who still continued to intrigue against the throne with a view to restore the Papal power. Blatchford was a timid man and weak, but none the less easy of control by the Jesuit agency of his nephew, Ephraim Clutterbuck, a designing, unscrupulous libertine, who used his privileges, as a lay agent of the Society of Jesus, to satisfy his carnal and wicked desires, while at the same time promoting the interests of Spain and his other employers, which occupation fell in with his appetite for adventure and his hatred of England. In early life he had suffered expulsion from Oxford for immorality; and his father had been slain in a brawl during one of the martyr-fires of Elizabeth's bloody predecessor, in which his reviling of the sufferers had led to the protests of a desperate sympathiser. So it would seem that, while his fanaticism and cruelty were hereditary, the son encouraged himself to believe that he had a justifiable hatred of his native country; which made him one of its active enemies, backed by the most powerful secret society ever founded or likely to be founded, the roots of which are

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struck deep in every country and in every community. The Freemasons are a mere International Club compared with the universality of the Society of Jesus, probably, if less powerful in our day, none the less industrious than when first they received the authorisation of the Bull of Pope Paul III. in 1540.

"You upbraid me for my warlike sword, my adventures, my amours, my worldliness," Clutterbuck would say to his long-suffering uncle; "but Ignatius de Loyola himself was a soldier, brought up to the profession of arms."

"But, inspired of the Virgin," Blatchford would retort, "he gave himself up to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ and Our Dear Lady, as their knight. He practised austerities, and preached penitence and good works."

"'Twas his vocation," the nephew would answer. "Mine is that of the lay officer, the diplomat, added to that of the soldier and——"

"Nay; hush! Walls have ears," the timid Justice would say.

"Not these; I have sounded every stone and brick of them. Pass the wine, old Fearful."

Master Blatchford pushed the flagon to his nephew; and left his chair, to listen at the door.

"I tell you we are private. You should know your own house better, and trust your servants: you may, for I have sounded every one of them. . . . It likes me now and then to rehearse the articles, not of my faith, but my triple occupation: soldier, agent, spy. Ah, ah, ah! Three in one—the earthly three——"

"Ephraim, desist. I will not condone thy profanity by listening to it," said Blatchford, rising. "Thou hast drunk too much wine; 'tis strange such prime vintage should only make thee ribald and obscene."

"I cry you mercy, uncle. Nay, sit ye down, and let us talk of gold and pearls, and pretty women. Dost know

how bravely I thrive with Mistress Dame Withycombe and her daughter ? ”

“ I would prefer to hear of your coming cargo of treasure from Mexico.”

“ ’Tis already due at Bristol ; Anthony goes to meet the prosperous barque. Trust me, it shall add to thy store. But what dost say to my other venture, the winning of Lucy from that traitorous coxcomb, David Yarcombe ? ”

“ If you would take her honestly and make her my niece, I would not say thee nay ; but to make capture of her in disguise, and break her heart, I think base, and without even the excuse of vengeance ; ’tis an infamy.”

“ Oh, oh ! ” laughed Clutterbuck. “ Hadst no amours in thy youth, no amusements, no love-scalps to fasten in thy belt, as they say the vaunted Raleigh’s Indians decorate their bodies withal ; and yet wast never wedded ? Oh, oh, uncle mine ; you hypocrite ! ”

“ Get to rest, and sleep off the fumes of Spain’s potent liquor ; and may to-morrow find thee sober and reasonable ! ”

“ To-morrow morn shall find me at home, with my ever complacent slave, Rebecca ; and at even a welcome guest at my neighbours, the Withycombes.”

And after many a similar wrangle they would part for the night. Blatchford would pray to the Virgin ; and Clutterbuck to none, a profane mercenary of Spain, in the cause of such successor to the English throne as the Pope should approve ; but a traitor even to the Church he served, as well as an unnatural son of his country.

The truth is Clutterbuck had well described himself to his uncle ; which it was a sort of mad delight so to do when in his cups. He was Anthony Kennoek, the soldier and adventurer, and also Ephraim Clutterbuck, the nephew of the Justice, and in both capacities a Papist spy and agent of Spain ; a strange blot on the national character,

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especially in those days, when the very life and soul of the kingdom depended upon the loyalty of its sons. He had arrived first at the Manor House, in open day, by waggon to Exeter, and thence by ship to Exmouth. A month later, he had, with subtle skill and dramatic disguise, come ashore at Exmouth in the manner already described. Duly authorised by the Society, and with letters that were commands to the faithful, the uncle who had not seen or heard of his nephew for years, made him free of the Manor House, introduced him to secret friends of Rome and Seville, and bound himself, by oaths and vows, to respect his nephew's confidence. . . . Clutterbuck, both as Clutterbuck and Kennock, had done good work for his employers, as a servant of the Holy Office in Spain and a spy on board one of Drake's ships; now he had business between the coast of Devon and the Society of Jesus in London. At the Manor House he had a secret room in which he kept his disguises, which were numerous; his favourite character being that of the reckless, audacious, ribald Kennock, his safest retreat his cottage, overlooking the Warren, his truest friend and ally his housekeeper, Rebecca, a Creole of Mexico, whom he had rescued from the Inquisition that he might make her his slave.

Of late he had been able to supply Spanish agents with valuable information touching the movements of ships sailing from Western ports, and of matters concerning Raleigh, Drake, Frobisher, and other great captains and advisers of "the bastard Elizabeth," as he and his friends delighted to call her; indeed, he was thriving well in his work of espionage, and might have achieved supreme victories for Spain and the Pope, had it not been for two things that are still mighty factors in the world—women and wine. He had conceived a lust for Lucy Withycombe; and her mother loved finery and jewels, of the which Kennock had plenty and to spare; and did spare vastly—bribes for the good word

of that vain and truculent matron, a woman of presence and in her girlhood no doubt a beauty, though she could never have been as attractive as her daughter Lucy. Not passion alone tempted him in that quarter, but the pride of conquest and the hatred of David Yarcombe, with whom he had quarrelled both in his capacity of Kennock and in his real personality of Clutterbuck. . . .

It may seem strange, that no one even suspected the slightest relationship of the two; but life is strange, and truth makes fiction halt to wonder. The costume of those days made it easy, with far less art of simulation than is required to-day, to masquerade successfully. The black square-cut coat, brown trunks and hose, the hair cut short, the grey-laced vest and ruff that Clutterbuck wore with clean-shaven face, made up an entirely different figure from the elaborately and richly dressed Kennock, with shoulder knots, laces, chains, brocades, rings, and feathers that went gaily with flowing wig, pointed beard and curled moustaches in which Kennock fancied himself mightily and played the part of the roystering gallant, the dauntless soldier and adventurer to the life. He had rare models for observation, not alone at Plymouth, Bideford, and Dartmouth, but at Westminster and Paul's Walk in London; and he had experience also of Seville and Spanish Mexico. . . . But he was like a bird of gorgeous plumage, lured by the artful imp of Love, that limed the pretty cage at Littleham and steeped the bread of his trap at the Mermaid, in the wine his soul did most commend.

To Master Hiliary Sharp and Exmouth generally Kennock claimed to be a Bristol man, professed to have sailed with Hawkins, and shared the* plunder of more than one Spanish prize, hated the dons and all their works, loved sack, and did not despise a pretty woman; that was the kind of man he was, and he did not care who knew it. He bought Somerton's house, overlooking the Warren;

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old Somerton having died and left no issue a few months prior to Kennock's landing at Exmouth. It was not much of a place, but it served him and his housekeeper, a dark-complexioned foreigner, who wore outlandish garments, and spoke English with a vile and sluggish accent, and in whose sharp, lynx-like eyes was a world of untranslated information; for she rarely talked, and when she spoke the responses at Littleham Church it was with a sneer, if you may believe the ever-observant Captain Liberty Dent. Her master was still a young fellow, not more than five-and-thirty; while she, alas!—well, no matter; even the most ill-favoured of dames object to have their ages exploited, and at the moment we have no particular quarrel with Mistress Rebecca. She gloried in her master's prowess, whatever it might be, for Exmouth had seen none of it, though with Littleham it had heard much. When she would defiantly praise him, against attack direct or by innuendo, she would avow that he was as victorious over his enemies as he was triumphant over the ladies, God bless their innocency! Her Hispano-French accent gave an edge to her commendation that grated terribly on the nerves of Captain Dent, to whom it recalled reminiscences of an interpreter who had questioned him for the Holy Office, so-called, in the city of Mexico. The old mariner in his heart believed Kennock to be a Papist spy, and that Rebecca, his housekeeper, was tarred with the same brush; but Dent was always crying "Wolf!"

Liberty Dent was one who doubted and denied. He saw a spy in every man whose pedigree he did not know from first to last. "Blatchford himself bain't no Puritan, any more than mun with the tail and the hoofs; they makes a cloak of seemin' to obey the new dispensation. Have I been inquisitioned for nothing? Have I studied their ways in Mexico and suffered in Seville, and can't tell a jay from a kestrel, or a ringdove from a sparrow

hawk? Go to, lads! Dame Withycombe may be won over by Master Kennock's pearls from the Indies, and gold chains from God knows where; but me and Mistress Lucy bain't to be hoodwinked, no more than Master Trelvelion himself. If I'm any judge of the sex we all loves, it's a matter of diplomacy that makes Mistress Lucy condescend to mun, and one day, if consent be not given, why, there are more ways of marrying than obtains at Littleham, and David Yarcombe comes of a fighting stock, none the worse for bein' somewhat of, as they say, a ne'er-do-well, and a bookman, since he hath a pretty trick of sword play, and can handle a boat as deftly as any mariner from here to Dartmouth or any other Devon port, north or south; which is sayin' more for mun than I'd think of asserting for myself. As for Mistress Rebecca, Anthony Kennock's housekeeper, over to the Cove, there was a superannuated duenna who'd drifted into the service of the Inquisition to Seville that was the very spit of her—a she-fiend, my lads, a she-fiend!"

It was on very rare occasions that Liberty Dent ventured to be thus outspoken. Master Blatchford being a Justice and one of the most influential persons thereabouts, on terms with Kennock, and having for his nephew a gentleman of consideration, Dent let the fire of his patriotism burn solitary in his own bosom, with such exception as I have quoted of a passing flash in the atmosphere of the Mermaid, and then only when he was well assured of the loyalty of the company. As a rule the toppers there, the men of the village and the stranger within their gates, discussed theology and the New World.

The Mermaid was a quaint half-timbered house, built on the ashes of the New Inn, which had been burnt, it was said, by a marauding ship of Spain, that had sailed into the haven in open day under English colours, played havoc with the place, and got clean away before anything

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like a defence could be offered. If the landmarks of the old heroic days have disappeared, the spirit of them lives on. History goes back, even to 1375, in justification of the hostility of Devon to the Spaniard; for in that year is recorded a long list of English ships captured by the Spaniards in the Bay of Brittany, at the head of which is named the *Christopher* of Exmouth, Robert Wykford master, her burden three thousand tons, her value £1,695 sterling; but it was not necessary for Devon or England to find in so ancient a challenge the stimulus of reprisals. There were more bitter memories than came of mere sea-fights and piracies to stir the blood in the miseries Englishmen had suffered in Spanish dungeons, in the torture-chambers of the Inquisition, and in the more merciful pile of the *auto da fé*.

CHAPTER III

BETWEEN SIREN SEA AND LUCY WITHYCOMBE

A STORMY day in March. The bar, that shut out the open sea to craft not very capably steered, was white with foam. The distant headlands were cut sharp against the sky. A group of men were gathered together about the Mermaid, which dispensed a generous hospitality to its customers where in our day the steam ferry and the railway station control the traffic of the river at Exmouth. You may no longer find there any trace of the old quay or tavern. Antiquarians will tell you that there was once upon a time a house called "The New Inn" thereabouts. "New Inns" and "New Churches" have come down to us intact for hundreds of years, still retaining their original and to-day incongruous titles; but Progress has wiped out every relic of the "New Inn" and the "Mermaid" at Exmouth, and set up in their place buildings that may be more comfortable, but are less pleasing to the eye that appreciates the artistic in domestic and ecclesiastical architecture. The Mermaid was less substantial than the house of the Raleighs, at Hayes Barton, but more ornate; had a wooden framework of carved timbers, overhanging gables and narrow diamond-paned windows, a flight of stone steps down to a landing-stage of stone and oak; and a landlord whose hogs grubbed the earth where the busy shops of Exmouth now ply a summer trade among dainty visitors.

Similar groups of men and boys, sometimes with women added, were assembled in the ports and riverside taverns of other resorts of shipping: Bristol, Bideford, Dartmouth, and many another harbour, not forgetting the inns and taverns of the Thames. Mariners were preaching the wealth of the Indies. Gospellers were holding forth on the duties of the Reformation. Many there were who combined in themselves both preacher and adventurer. Of such was Master Sidmouth Trevelion, who, on this March day of our story, 1586, was endeavouring to recruit brave hands for his ship, then lying at Dartmouth, with other vessels bound for the Indies, and *en route* for such pickings of Spanish galleons of war or commerce they might fall in with by the way.

If Exmouth called him "Old Sid," and some "the Prophet Trevelion," they were not terms of derision, but of endearment. There was no finer man in South Devon, physically or mentally. He had smitten the Spaniard on land and sea, swore by his Maker and St. George, knew his Bible by heart, likewise every course and current of the sea that led to Spain and her dominions, had captured two Spanish ships on his last voyage home, and was now only waiting with Captain Oxenham to make one of their most adventurous voyages to the Indies. Their ships were lying at Dartmouth; but his own would presently sail for Exmouth, to take on board any of his friends and neighbours who would care to venture with him. He was an Exmouth man, and of such he hoped would be his crew. A bold, defiant, sturdy character, Sidmouth Trevelion, with broad brow and grizzled beard, in russet jerkin, flat cloth cap decorated with a single feather, and heavy boots that struck the earth square and firm; a bony, brawny man, with sanguine brown eyes, knuckly hands and iron sinews, but with a musical bass voice—that might have won him a place in the Queen's choir—and a persuasive, if

fiery eloquence ; a remarkable man, built to lead and command.

The struggle between light and darkness was ever a favourite metaphor with Master Trevelion. "If the light comes but faintly through the darkened waters," he was saying to his open-mouthed auditors, "it is coming, as sure as the tide rolls along the shores of Devon. Philip of Spain may put flashes of hell-fire into the billows, and his second in power, the Scarlet Lady, may Inquisition English heroes ashore ; but the end is light. Did you ever hear of God being worsted by foreigners ? Did you ever hear of the devil being allowed more than a passing show, just to give the world notification of the old serpent's existence ? But what is most material to you, my lads, and to all of us who go down to the sea in ships, is not only a righteous hope of reward ; if we live we smite the enemy and seize his treasures ; and if we die we enter in at the gates of Paradise, where it is one long summer by a virgin ocean upon which you may navigate your own barques to all eternity. Now, lads, we sail Thursday for the Spanish main, well assured of a quick return, every pocket jammed with gems and gold, and every heart beating with the satisfaction of adding glory to the Flag and serving the cause of Christianity."

Then all but David Yarcombe went into the tavern, and many signed to sail and obey the behests of Captain Sidmouth Trevelion, who commanded his own barque, with Jim Carew as sailing-master. And thus the Western ships from year to year went forth to the conquest of the world. They were pigmies against giants, but very active pigmies. Pride of race and the fear of God pervaded captains and crews, and they enjoyed a large prosperity. To those whose chief object was material treasure, spoiling the Spaniard was an act of religious duty. It weakened the power of the enemy of God. David Yarcombe could

hardly for shame go home after scenes like this, and he had been present at many. For a time he encouraged himself to believe that it was his father's will that guided him. But the truth lay nearer his heart. . . . Had it not been for Lucy Withycombe, he would long ago have sailed away for good and all with dear old Sid Trevelion. . . . But "Oh, don't leave me, David!" was Lucy's continuous appeal. "I am not happy at home, any more than you, and how should I find the smallest consolation in life had I not you to lean upon?"

Thus, year after year, companion after companion departed, and David had only his books, his dreams—and his Lucy. She lived at Littleham, as we have seen; and he at what was known as the Old Farm, overlooking Littleham Cove, the first some two miles from Exmouth, the last less than half the distance. The villagers marvelled at them. They had never seen so faithful a wooing. It was well known that David was anxious to go to sea. No want of pluck held him back from foreign adventure, for in many a storm he had been the first to launch his boat to the rescue of mariners in distress. Of a surety he was not much of a hand at farming, nor were his father's lands noted for their fertility; but Master Silas Yarcombe went the wrong way to win his son to the plough and the byre. Moreover, it was not necessary that David should earn his living, as was the lot of other lads thereabouts; for his father owned property that brought in fair rent on the coast, even at Torbay and Falmouth.

"As far as you be concerned," old Liberty Dent would say to David, "art better to do than ever was Walter Raleigh before he sallied forth into the world to seek his fortune, and carve mun's way to fame with his sword. . . . I remember mun when he was a youngster, before he left Hayes Barton for college. Seems as if it were but yesterday, my second voyage to the Indies, when I see him lolling

down by the quay to Topsham, listening at we fellows' yarns of the seas and examining with eager eyes the possessions of the sailing-master of the *Devon*, which were gold and silver and pearls as big as nuts, and feathers that sparkled in the sun; and he was envyin' us all the time, though some bore the marks of the devilish Inquisitors of Mexico, for Seville had sent her damned emissaries of what they call their Holy Office to the New World; and I call to mind that young Raleigh spat when we spoke of the cruel dons and the Papist rogues; and by Our Lord, I spat likewise, and it was grand to see the sailing-master of the *Devon* clap his big hand on to mun's shoulder, and say: 'My lad, when you're a man, you shall strike a blow for England and St. George!' 'And for our glorious Queen, Elizabeth!' exclaimed the lad before the master had finished; whereat we all gave a great cheer for the Queen, and he out with a golden piece and vowed he would drink with us to our next voyage; at which we all laughed, and the master put the brave lad's coin aside and begged him to do us the honour. . . . And the master said: 'My lad, you'll be Lord High Admiral one day, and I hope I may have a son to sail under your command.' The lad said: 'God send you be a true prophet!' And like an old fool, I felt a lump in my throat and I gave him a hearty 'Amen!' . . . I suspect that gold piece was the only coin the lad owned, for they were but poor gentlefolk, the Raleighs; though Walter's mother was open-handed, of a noble countenance and figure, a good sample of Devonian wives and mothers; as thine was, Master David, God rest her soul!"

Which set David pondering; and revived his memory of a sweet-voiced, gentle being, at whose knee he had said his prayers, and who had asked God to remember His faithful people, harassed by fire and sword, and martyred for Christ's sake, and to be merciful to all prisoners and captives, and

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to bless and preserve her dear son when she would no longer be spared to watch over him. . . . And he little thought, when he sang the praises of Raleigh and spread his fame, that he might live to become, not only the servant, but the friend of that brave gentleman, whose life was a glory and whose death was a tragedy—curses light on the memory of that base king, James II., for ever and for ever!

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CHAPTER IV

YOUNG LOVE AND OLD AMBITION

A LITTLE over a year had passed, when Master Trevelion returned from the expedition for which he had been recruiting men at Exmouth on a certain stormy day in March. There are more ways of filling your purse than by digging gold in Spanish mines. Foul weather and other hindrances had compelled Trevelion to head his ships for England without accomplishing the special object of his voyage. Nevertheless, he and his fellow-adventurers had made a profit in the way of a Spanish prize; in which, moreover, they had discovered letters and dispatches for King Philip that might prove of great import to Sir Walter Raleigh. . . . As it turned out, Trevelion's home-coming was not without a momentous bearing upon David Yarcombe's future. The brave old mariner turned up at a period of storm and stress in the lad's career. . . . There are wrecks ashore as well as wrecks at sea; land-rats and water-rats. . . . David was destined to learn this, and quickly, by personal experience.

The very day after dear old Sid had once more put in an appearance at the Mermaid, Master Silas Yarcombe, of the Old Farm, broke with his son. It was a sudden thing to David; but the old man had given the matter much thought. Moreover, he had discussed it with Captain Liberty Dent on the one hand, and with the parson at Littleham on the other. It is not necessary to

inquire into the form and character of their judgment. The old man had made up his mind before he asked their opinions. He had, however, been influenced, in a measure, by an interview with Dame Withycombe.

"I'd desire to have a neighbourly talk with you, Mistress Withycombe," he had said.

"You are very welcome," replied Lucy's mother, adjusting her cap, and fingering the jewelled chain that hung from her neck over her laced bodice, "very welcome, Master Yarcombe; and pray you be seated."

They were a characteristic couple. Both of steadfast expression; she with keen eyes and apple cheeks, her thick, grey hair coming low down upon the forehead; he thin but wiry, with a hatchet-face, thin lips, and a forehead too narrow for his broad chin; there were indications of cunning in his furtive, watchful eyes, and in a certain clutching of the fingers; and yet he was a good sort of fellow, as the world goes.

"It's of my son I desire to commune with you. He has no call to the land, and is of an age when life should be an earnest business. 'Tis said, both here and at Exmouth, that if 'twere not for young Mistress Lucy he would long ere this have sought and found his fortune beyond the seas. I reckon you can set my mind at rest on this matter."

Dame Withycombe pursed up her lips and wrinkled her forehead.

"Supposing mun was seized of the Old Farm and all my estate, and I have property at Dartmouth, Exeter, and Topsham, would Lucy be ready to settle down with mun, and fulfil the duty God has laid upon us all, to increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth?"

Dame Withycombe moved impatiently in her chair.

"If so be as that would be their resolve, then I would know how to provide for their future and my own. If

otherwise, then it is foregone that my son David go forth into the world, and seek some other fortune, different from that mun might possess at home."

"Then, be happy, dear neighbour and friend, in coming to a conclusion. Let Master David gird up his loins and set forth. My daughter is not for him, with my consent, nor for any other suitor, until she hath had an opportunity to give the right man a chance of making himself known. Lucy Withycombe is about to journey to London, where she will go to Court, look you, and mix with the nobility; the Withycombes are of an ancient race—a west-country name equal to the best, and——"

"I hope you would not seek, madam, to put a slight upon the name of Yarcombe?" the old man said, interrupting the lady's somewhat scornful answer to his proffer of an alliance between the houses of Yarcombe and Withycombe; made, nevertheless, without the faintest warrant from his son.

"Not by any means, dear neighbour," she answered, rising from her chair with some show of hauteur. "I can only answer a plain question in a plain way, which is Devonshire, I believe; my daughter has no intention of marrying, nor, I may add, of spending her life in the humdrum village of Littleham or on the dreary shores of Littleham Cove."

"I wish you a very good day, madam," said Master Yarcombe, kicking the rushes, that had been freshly spread upon the clean floor, as he stamped out into the garden, his stick ringing upon the paved footway.

"A termagant!" he muttered to himself, as he went across the road to the King's Head and ordered a stoup of liquor. "An impudent old braggart in petticoats! Damme, I wish she'd been a man! I never quite understood until now why Withycombe is so mild and butter-milky; with a 'by yer leave' and 'beg pardon'—damme, I say! But 'tis as well. Now I know my cue and can

“speak my lines exact, as old Liberty Dent saith in the miracle-play. Lord, lord! What a world it is!”

The master of the King's Head, waiting until Yarcombe had drunk his liquor, said: “I didn't rightly catch what you was saying, Master Yarcombe; what might it be that you remarked?”

“Oh, 'twas nothing; I think I was talking to munsself. She be a hard-mettled dame, Mistress Withycombe?”

“And proud as Lucifer,” said the landlord, with a smile. “Oh, we know her, I warrant you.”

“Pride goeth before a fall,” rejoined Yarcombe; “and I wish you a good day and good fortune, neighbour.”

“I thank you most hearty, sir,” the landlord replied, speaking to an empty room, for the angry master of the Old Farm had re-crossed the road, and was making for the near way over the fields to Littleham Cove; a path which David had trodden so often, as blithely as the lark singing against the blue of April skies.

“I am glad to find you at home,” said David's father, meeting his son on the threshold. “A word or two, if you please.”

“At your service, father,” David replied, following him into the house.

“You are unwilling to look the future in the face,” said the old man, as if he had learnt the words he was saying by heart. “You are of more than full age, three-and-twenty. I was a married man, with a son two year old, at your time of life. He died. Had he lived, I might have had a heir keen to do man's duty. You are the son of my old age; none the less beloved. I hoped to endow you with the earnings of a lifetime, and the estate of a father upon whose name no blemish has ever fallen.”

“God bless you!” said David.

“That is not the question,” the old man replied, somewhat disturbed.

"I beg your pardon," said David, with a smile that threatened to break into a laugh, not of derision, but of affection; the laugh of a son who, the next moment, would have had his father in his arms.

"Beg no man's pardon," came the quick reply; "commit no offence that calls for it. . . . You have put me out. . . . Listen to me, and speak when I have done. . . . I do not choose that the Old Farm, and my houses, lands, and hereditaments along the coast, shall pass out of the name of Yarcombe, and come to naught. My dead brother's son is a staid young man of thirty, a farmer to his finger-tips, honest, true, of spotless character; you remember him?"

"I am listening, and will obey your injunction not to speak until you have finished," David replied; though his cousin occurred to him as one concerning whose appearance there was nothing worthy of controversy. David had only seen him once or twice. He lived in Gloucestershire.

"It is not my desire that mun should pack without scrip or favour. I shall bestow you well. A purse ample for the day; a sum of money in reserve, at the bank of Bideford, and in London or Plymouth, if so desired; but have no fear that I will see mun stinted of means, even to the extent of a ship, if needs must. But henceforth, except, maybe, as a guest, shake the dust of the Old Farm off thy feet, and go forth, whither 'tis meet for thy ambition and the gifts with which God hath favoured thee. . . . 'Tis with a sad heart I shall see my only son turn mun's back upon the home of his birth; but turn it must, and without more delay, lest mun's best faculties rust, and thou be easy knocked on the head the first time ill-fortune bring thee face to face with yonder Spanish beasts of prey, and what not, since it be the false ambition of the men of Devon to seek them out, for glory and for plunder; and God grant thou shalt do honour to mun's Queen and country!"

Having thus delivered himself, the old man staggered to a seat and covered his face with his hands. The tears trickled through his fingers.

"God bless you, my dear, kind, thoughtful, magnanimous old father! Nay, don't take it so to heart. I am sure you are doing an act of duty that smarts like a wound."

David put his arms round the old man, who took from his pocket a vast cotton handkerchief and wiped his face, and muttered denunciations of himself, as "an old fool, to blubber; a weak, infirm old milksop! But I love you mun, and that's the truth. . . . And I love my lands, and my name, and—— But I had forgotten to say that if it happen that you need it at my death, I have bequeathed unto you a house and garden, on the Dart; 'tis but a cot, as one may say, but enough for a tired man; and also that I leave thee a reversionary interest, so-called, in my estate, the management of which, under proper control of the law, will be in the hands of thy cousin, and certain share of the same at my death."

The old man looked up at David through his tears, glad that it had occurred to him to make these modifications in an otherwise sweeping act of partnership and testament; for, as yet, he had not signed the papers having regard to the disposition of his property, for which his lawyer had received instructions.

"Nay, say no more, dear old friend and father," said David. "I am your son, and I shall endeavour to be worthy of you. . . . When shall I take my leave? To-night, or to-morrow?"

"When art fitted out with such tackle as thy plans may require," said the old man, now bracing himself to the pleasanter situation. "Maybe next week, or next month, or next year; 'tis as it may hap; 'tis according to what mun desires. . . . But I've made the way smooth for mun in

respect of a certain lady, or, better say young girl, for she cannot be more than nineteen at most. She is not for David Yarcombe, or any other, her mother saith, and goes to London to be a Court lady——”

“What do you mean, father?”

“I have been, as 'twere, ambassador to madam, and—heaven forgive me—found her a damned, hard-mouthed old betch! She'd have us know that her family comes of a noble stock—damme, so does a porpoise, or a pelicum, if age counts for ancestry!”

“What are you talking of, father? Of whom are you speaking?”

“Of old Mother Stiff-i'-the-back, that scorns, neither by your leave nor without it, to have thee for a son-in-law. . . . So get mun out among the brave and the free, and ennoble thyself, David, and God and St. George be thy armourers; and that's all I have to say; so see to it, my lad, see to it, see to it!”

The old man took up his stick and hurried into the house-place (they had been conversing in the best parlour), and David could hear him tramping into the yard, banging doors after him, like one retreating from the pursuit of an enemy. . . . David did not know what to make of it; so he consulted a counsellor that never failed to soothe and give him patience. It was not often that he drew forth the magic pipe. There were times when his lute was his sweetest companion; but the lute went best with an audience; the pipe that Raleigh gave to the English world was enough unto itself. . . . David stooped to a cupboard mantel, and, taking therefrom a long white wooden pipe (the gift of Sidmouth Trevelion) with a darkened bowl, proceeded to place therein a small plug of the golden weed; which operation finished with loving carefulness, he opened the tinder-box that stood upon the hob (there was no fire in the best parlour;

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if they wanted to be warm they sat in the inglenook of the kitchen or house-place), struck a light, sat himself down in the easiest chair the room provided, and smoked and smoked, and watched the wreaths disperse; and so communed with destiny.

CHAPTER V

A CONFLICT OF TONGUES

A SQUARE, formal old Tudor house. Broad façade, low windows, small square panes, a quaint gabled wing, thick, deep thatch, whitewashed walls, dimity curtains, a paved porch, white as the June roses that mingled their perfumes with marjoram, lad's-love, and the breath of the surrounding hedgerows. Within, whitewash again, and timbered ceilings, oak chests, dressers filled with china and copper pans; the whole place open to the summer winds. An oak-cased clock on the stairs, hoarse with its many years of service; and yet the Withycombe house had not struck old Peter Yarcombe as anything out of the common; but he was too full of his own affairs to take note of the cleanliness and dignified formality of it all.

The family were in council, when David arrived with his news; but before he could get out a word about his enforced departure, whither at present he knew not, Dame Withycombe flung at him, with the announcement that her daughter (she no longer called her "Lucy," but "our daughter") had been invited to join her cousin, Mistress Bessie Throckmorton, at Court, as her companion and friend, and with every prospect of advancement.

"I came to surprise *you*," said David, "but you have surprised *me*. I hope you are well, Lucy," he went on, addressing the girl and seeming to ignore the others. Lucy's father was accustomed to this kind of treatment, but Dame Withycombe was to-day on her very highest horse.

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"I would beg to be favoured with your attention, Master Yarcombe, if you will be so condescending."

"I am at your service, madam."

David smiled at Lucy, as if to reassure her that he had no intention of taking offence. Lucy looked at the ribbons in her shoes.

"I would have you to understand that our daughter will fulfil no menial position."

"That I need no assurance of, madam; I am well convinced that you would not permit of it, nor Lucy consent an you did."

"The Throckmortons are our relations. My mother was Mistress Bessie Throckmorton's aunt; and whenever we have met, always on the most gracious terms, Mistress Bessie 'Lucying' our daughter and Lucy 'Bessying' her in return, most familiar and affectionate. I need not remind you that Mistress Bessie is one of Her Most Excellent Majesty's ladies-in-waiting."

"You need not," David answered, with deference. "All Devon is aware of the fact, and happy in its knowledge."

"I am glad you feel that," said old Withycombe, speaking for the first time.

"And what saith Lucy to the invitation?" David asked.

"What our daughter should say."

"Refuses!" rejoined David, with a flash of mischief in his eyes that Lucy well understood.

"Refuses?" exclaimed Dame Withycombe. "No, sir; she accepts, with a heart that is grateful, if proud."

"I need not say that I shall pray for her happiness," David answered.

"By which token," continued madam, "as Master Withycombe, the head of the family, will tell you, there is nothing serious between you and our daughter, nothing more than a neighbourly friendship."

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David looked at Lucy. She stammered a "but" and an "if," and was very much embarrassed.

"Yes, yes, daughter," said old Withycombe, taking the cue from his imperious wife, "we know what you would say. If Master David were the settled and acknowledged heir to his father's estates, which he is not, and I am bound to say I know it from evidence I have gathered far from Littleham——"

"You know my cousin, then?" said David, interrupting him.

"I do, my young friend," the old man replied; "he came to Exmouth and Littleham while you were coasting about Dartmouth."

"I congratulate you, sir, on making so desirable an acquaintance," said David.

"As my husband was about to say, when you interrupted him," madam interposed, "we cannot consent to anything in the nature of a tie between you and our daughter; not alone because you are in question as to your future, but that we desire our daughter to see the world before she commits herself to—— well—— to, let us say, a promise of marriage. Is it not so, my love?"

"David," said Lucy, looking him in the face, the tears in her eyes. "Oh, David——"

"Nay, my dear, I know what you would say."

Lucy did not know at the moment, so it was well that David could interpret her looks.

"I love your daughter, madam, and shall never ask any other woman to be my wife. But, ere ever I ask you for her hand, I will lay at her feet such a fortune as her father and mother may well regard as sufficient for the material comfort and happiness of their daughter. . . . And for anything else, my life, my future, all my hopes are hers; and that I say before all the world, come what may."

"Oh, David!" once more exclaimed Lucy; and she

would have flung herself into his arms, had not her mother held her back.

It was strange that Lucy at this moment of a great crisis should have been unable to say a word, when one knows what a vocabulary she had, how bright and lively she could be, what a tongue there was in her pretty mouth. . . . On the other hand David was never more ready of speech, nor, perhaps, more eloquent in the simple expression of his love and ambition for his mistress.

"If ever Lucy do prefer another than me," he went on, "God helping, I will give her up; but until she tell me with her own lips that she no longer loves me, I shall never rest until I have made her my wife."

"Would you debar her from the rightful chances of her new position and her advancement, to make a great and important match with one of settled means and lordly family? Even now, you said you would not stand in her way if——"

"Oh, mother, mother!" exclaimed Lucy, suddenly facing them all: "what value do you set upon me? A country girl setting out for town to seek a fortune in a sordid marriage, or to serve her friend and mistress as honestly and true as she in her turn doth serve her mistress, the Queen Elizabeth? Mother, oh! mother, spare me all such thoughts and vanities. You know that I love David, though at the same time I am conscious of the duty I owe to my father and mother;" turning to whom, with dignity she added, "Let there be an end of this proud and unprofitable talk; it has made my heart sore, and if continued, will make me despise myself. As to fortune and position, if David Yarcombe would take me now, and we had to become beggars by the roadside, I would be his wife and share his lot."

"Lucy, my love!" half sobbed David; and the girl, in a burst of passionate tears, flung herself into his arms.

A rare prelude to the scene that fate had ordained to the triumphant lover down at the Mermaid!

CHAPTER VI

A BATTLE WITH SWORDS

WALKING on air, David sped over the fields and along the lanes, to tell Master Sidmouth Trevelion of his good luck and to ask him to take him as a fellow-adventurer. He imagined to himself, as he hurried along, the joy of the old mariner. He saw a quick fortune of precious things won on the seas, and perhaps a position, too, at Court. Why not? He was well-read, a scholar, master of the Latin tongue, versed in Greek and French, and learned in many ways. He would not have said as much to any one, but could not help confessing it to himself. Oh, how he would work and strive and fight, until he could claim the girl of his heart. A great captain, perhaps an officer of the Queen, God knows what; and all at once he saw in the distant sea the shape and form of an island of gold, with mountains of the precious metals, palms, ferns and flowers. . . . "Who knows," he said to himself, "that this may not be an omen of good fortune!" He stood still to watch the sunset. . . . Have you not often seen the clouds on a summer night, when they have piled themselves up into mountains of gold around smooth lakes and seas of tinted crystal, with every kind of tropical foliage in the valleys between—some such illusion as the mirage of a lake in the desert, that mocks the thirsty traveller? . . . "I think I am mad with joy," the lad said to himself, bounding on again, nor stopping now until he is shaking hands with Sidmouth Trevelion, and offering

his cheek to the old man in his excitement. Trevelion kissed the lad, as he had saluted his own son before he lost him in a Spanish ambuscade.

"Wilt have me turn into a Frenchman?" he said, "hugging thee, thou madcap; what's in the wind?"

David was not himself. A free man, with the loving tears and kisses of his self-betrothed upon his lips, he had lost all his presence of mind, and spoke aloud what he had only intended for Master Trevelion's ear. At the window, close by, drinking with a parlour full of men who had been toasting Master Trevelion, sat Anthony Kennock in all his finery, gold chain, brocaded cloak, jewelled sword-belt; loud voice, strident, quarrelsome, and half drunk.

"I may go with you," said David, "as your fellow adventurer, with moneys for a ship if need be; and after our first prosperous voyage, I am to marry Lucy Withycombe."

"You lie!" shouted Kennock, from the window.

David turned with amazement, to see Kennock come stalking from the house, followed by others little less drunk than himself.

"Regard him not," said Trevelion.

"I did not address you, Master Kennock," said David; "pray, therefore, spare me your comment."

"I will not spare you the kick of my boot," roared Kennock, making at David, as if to carry out his threat.

"Nay, Master Kennock, thou art ill-mannered, and I beg thou wilt retire," said Trevelion, who it will be noted "thee'd" and "thou'd" people with an added emphasis when his feelings were most engaged in anger or otherwise.

"Which is most ill-mannerly," replied Kennock, with swaggering insolence, "he who boasts his conquest and talks of marriage, or he who is silent, though assured of the consent of the lady's parents?"

"Nay, let us have no brawling here, neighbour Kennock," said Liberty Dent, stepping between David and his enemy.

"Brawl, an you list. I spare the lady the shame of naming her; can he say as much?" shouted Kennock.

Trevelion, with a restraining hand on David's arm, replied, "Thou should'st not have listened to a private conversation; but, having done so, 'twas surely a knavish trick to force thyself into our confidences."

"Knavish trick in your teeth!" said Kennock, pushing aside David's friends and Trevelion, who desired peace.

"Thou'rt drunk, else would I cut thy wizend, thou interloper!" Trevelion replied. "Come, David, this is no company for us."

"But, by Our Lady, 'tis company for you!" shouted Kennock, trembling with passion.

"By whom dost swear, thou Papist son of Antichrist?" retorted Trevelion, David standing calmly by his side, bravely suppressing a desire to be at Kennock's throat.

The old Puritan's blood was up, a fresh interest quickening his animosity by the discovery that at heart this braggart, Kennock, was what he always suspected him to be, an enemy to the true God, and in league with Father Absolem, who had quarters at the Manor House, as was not denied by Master Blatchford, a privileged Justice who, in that out-of-the-way corner of the world, still, though without ostentation, defied the ordinances of the Reformed Church.

"Swear'st by Our Lady—what lady, sirrah?" demanded Trevelion. "Stand apart from him, lads; this is my quarrel."

"I have no quarrel with you," Kennock replied; "the coward at your side is my man; our quarrel is an old one. To-day we meet opportunely, and will settle it. Draw and defend yourself."

Except for his dagger, a weapon more for ornament than use (and David had donned his best attire for his memorable visit to the Withycombes), the lad was unarmed; but in a fit of mad passion he burst into the midst of the excited

group, and with the back of his left hand struck Kennock in the face ; at the same moment, seizing him by the wrist of his sword-arm, he prevented Kennock from unsheathing his weapon.

"Friends, friends, desist !" shouted Dent, drawing, and placing himself in an attitude of protection towards David.

"Part them, part them !" cried the others ; and the two adversaries were held forcibly aloof from each other.

"Give me a sword !" cried David ; "and stand ye apart, good friends."

Kennock had drawn his Italian rapier, as fine a weapon as money could buy, and would have advanced upon David even unarmed as he was, had not Dent and Trevelion bared their blades against him.

"Back, ere I stab thee !" said Trevelion. "Friends, we constitute ourselves a Court of Honour."

Kennock retreated, flung aside his jerkin, and examined his weapon.

"Take my sword, David," said Trevelion ; "it shall not shame thee. 'Tis Spanish ; the better it shall become the traitorous flesh of thine enemy, pricked with the toasting-fork of a don."

"Curses on you, we waste time !" said Kennock.

David kissed his sword, and felt how it became him.

"It likes me well," he said.

"That shall it !" said Trevelion. "Off with thy doublet, lad."

Half stripped to his waist, the lad was a picture of bright manhood ; thick brown hair pushed back from a fair open forehead, deep blue eyes, lithe of limb, and of more than medium stature, he might have been Virtue typified in antagonism with Vice ; though Vice was broad of chest, powerful, and, throwing off his drunken swagger, now looked a very formidable cut-throat.

"Friends, neighbours, give them room," said Dent

making way for Kennock, while the rest of the crowd gathered in a ring about the combatants.

"Be wary, David," said Trevelion, "to thy guard, lad, thine hand steady, thine eye watchful; at the first opening, at him; but wait for it, with reserve."

"Damn you!" roared Kennock, striding within striking distance; and pretending a rush, he made a shrewd feint that was responded to by David with great artfulness.

Kennock was not so drunk as he would have them believe; and if he were, the dangerous situation sobered him. His policy of battle was to deceive David, not only as to the mood he was in, but to tempt the lad into a rash attack. He had learnt his sword practice in a far more proficient school than that in which David had been taught; but the young Devonian had in his nobler aspirations a skill that Providence sometimes vouchsafes to virtue and a great cause. Thus David slew Goliath.

The lookers-on held their breath, as the strong and experienced fighter failed in feint and thrust either to ruffle David or to uncover his body. They had not seen such sword-play, nor any, for that matter, but slash and cut. This was for them the first exhibition of the duello; but it was by no means Kennock's first encounter.

Trevelion watched the fight with anxious eyes, determined, ill-luck befalling his dear lad, to avenge him; little thinking, in that case, that it would on both sides have been a case of the Church Militant.

The combatants said never a word, nor took any rest. Kennock plied his man with every kind of device to win him into the attack; and David put into practice every responding manœuvre to find an opening that should justify either cut or lunge. Advance, retreat, attack, defence, thrust, parry, changes from tierce to quarte; then, feeling his way to an entire change of tactics, Kennock quickened his attack, from one of fence to a sword-play far more in

keeping with the sabre than the rapier, aiming a deadly head-blow at his adversary; who, avoiding it more by luck than skill, rushed upon his antagonist, caught his sword-arm with a grip of iron, and ran him through.

With a scream of agony and despair Kennock fell into the arms of the bystanders; David withdrawing his weapon, the swish of which sickened him; 'twas like the drawing of a skewer from the ox that had been roasted whole at a Dartmouth feast, when Drake brought the Spanish galleon into port.

As they laid Kennock upon the beach, underneath the Mermaid's windows, there was a strange revelation. His wig came off with his hat, and showed a clean-shaven tonsure.

"By our Lord, a revelation!" exclaimed Trevelion.

Liberty Dent laid hold upon the dead man's short, well-trimmed beard and moustache, and all gave to his hand. And lo and behold, there was the face of Ephraim Clutterbuck, the nephew of Master Blatchford!

"Which explains many things," said Trevelion, as he gazed upon the true features of David's now silent foe and one of Queen Elizabeth's bitterest enemies.

Straight upon the discovery there appeared on the scene Mr. Justice Blatchford, and a posse of his servants, armed to the teeth.

"What have ye done, ye lawless men?" he asked.

"David hath slain Goliath, and rid the world of a blasphemous ruffian," said Sidmouth Trevelion, "a double traitor, double-dyed with crime; but, thank God, dead and done for!"

Blatchford raised his hands with horror as he looked upon the dead face of his nephew and fellow-conspirator; but he was quite equal to the occasion.

"Carry the body to the Manor House, my lads," he said, addressing his men hard by, "while I summon the

crowner to hold his quest." Then, turning to his armed escort and pointing to Trevelion and David, he commanded their arrest.

"What!" said Trevelion. "Arrest us! Wherefore, and by what warrant?"

"By the authority of the law, and in fulfilment of my duty as a Justice of the Peace."

"A fig for such Justice!" said Liberty Dent. "Master David Yarcombe did but defend himself from murderous attack, and neither he nor Master Trevelion will be arrested so long as there be a sword or a cudgel among us. What say you, comrades?"

"As thou sayest!" they shouted, leaving the body of Kennock, and facing the Justice and his men.

"Methinks 'twere best, Master Blatchford, that you talked not of arresting and the like, lest we tear the Manor House about thine ears, and make it a pyre for thee and thy Papist spy."

"Dastard, misbeliever!" said Blatchford, beside himself. "Lay hands upon him."

"At your peril," answered Trevelion.

The foremost of the Blatchford escort lowered his halberd and advanced, to be immediately disarmed and thrust back upon his fellows, who were thus thrown into disorder.

"Coward!" exclaimed Blatchford, frowning upon his unhappy retainer.

"Nay, he's no coward," said Trevelion. "But should he pluck up courage to come on again, I'll make dead meat of him as sure as he's a misguided and misbegotten knave."

Liberty Dent and the others backed up Old Sid, and seemed to be spoiling for a fight.

The halberdiers did not reciprocate their heat. They knew their men. Trevelion was equal to a score such as

they, and they knew it. Moreover, they felt like men fighting in a bad cause. Blatchford's servants were no less unpopular than their master.

"Draw them off, Master Blatchford, or by my soul we'll eat them," said Liberty Dent, held back by David from attacking the lot single-handed; while the landlord of the Mermaid stood calmly in his doorway ready to play the part of a pacific or warlike citizen whichever might be to the advantage of a man who had the misfortune to be one of the tenants of Blatchford the Justice.

"It shall not be said, even in the course of duty, that I caused any man's blood to be shed," said Blatchford; "'tis sufficient that I know ye all, and, sooner or later, can hale ye before the law and ensure your punishment. Men, lower your arms, and carry our murdered brother hence."

"The serpent is counted wise, but he hath to go upon his belly," said Trevelion; "and thou shalt grovel too, Master Blatchford. I've a mind to take thee now, and carry thee on board the *Saint Paul* to Gravesend, and have thee answer for thy treason in London."

"Heed him not," commanded Blatchford.

"Obey your master," said Trevelion, as the Blatchford men seemed to hesitate. (Liberty Dent faced them threateningly.) "Take up your brother if so you regard him. We who know him for a double-dyed traitor, regard him as carrion not worthy Christian burial. The only consolation honest men can have in contemplating such an English-speaking villain is that he is dead; that he was no Devonian, nor e'en a true-bred islander, his mother being a harlot and his father the devil himself."

Trevelion was given to exaggeration, and Blatchford continually following him with a shifty eye seemed to irritate his nerves; so that he was less dignified than was his wont under trying circumstances.

It was well that Blatchford presently turned his back

upon Trevelion and the rest, and followed in the wake of his men, who had raised the body of Kennock upon their shoulders and were bearing it away towards the Manor House.

"There will be trouble," said Trevelion to David, when the lad had washed himself and partaken of a rousing stoup of liquor, and had received the congratulations of his friends. "An Blatchford were shrewd herein as we might wish, he would let this flea stick; but he has others to consider; he will be pushed on to seek revenge, in the name of Justice. We will slip our cable before his anchor's raised, my lad, and forestall his mandate. No knowing what he may contrive against thee. 'Tis best we go aboard the *Saint Paul* to-night, and sail for the Thames, whither I have an official call. I will to Littleham Cove, and make arrangements with thy father and explain what has occurred. Hie thee to thy mistress, and take thy leave. Nay, answer me not; 'tis best; trust me to know when the finger of the Lord points me the way; and thus it is. Get thee gone. Friends, lend mun a horse; and, my lads, some of you shall row me round to Littleham Cove, and bring to the *Saint Paul* Master David's belongings, his chest and kit and the like. Come, my lads, bustle, bustle."

In little less time than it takes to relate, David was galloping to Littleham and Trevelion was steering his pinnacle for the landing-place of the Old Farm. In the distance, they could both see the funereal procession of the Blatchford crew, wending along the hillside near by the port of Topsham.

Book II

PAUL'S WALK, LONDON, AND THEREABOUTS

CHAPTER I

^hTWIXT SACK AND SWORD

IT was a glorious spring day when David entered London. Warned by his friend and captain to have a care how he comported himself with strangers who might accost him, David had set forth with a proper discretion, but without fear. The fleshing of his maiden sword had made another man of him. He felt a new sense of power. A man might know something of the theory and rules of battle, and the use of the sword under skilled attack, but to stake one's life upon nothing more than the experiences of a bloodless practice brought into play new and untried powers. To face death with unshaken nerves, to stand firm and fear not, to be deft and wary with your weapon against the naked blade of a murderous adversary, these were capacities that David would have doubted of himself had he entered into a conflict in cold blood.

Englishmen had probably fought duels in France, in Spain, and in Italy a hundred years before this time; but the formalities of the duello had as yet hardly become an English institution. Men fought and killed each other in

quarrel, but without much regard for comparative considerations of weapons, or any code of honour in the management thereof. They drew upon each other, and got the business over while their blood was up; though, in what might be called the higher walks of military life and social distinction, some show of warning and punctilio of practice were no doubt observed. The French have taught us many pernicious things. Though we knew how to wield the sword from the day we first began to wear one, it was the lively Gaul who made us proficient in the duello. The wager of battle in the Middle Ages was a different affair altogether. It needed the feline temperament of the Frenchman to elaborate the judicial encounter into the polite art of the quarrel innuendo, and the nod offensive that should evolve scientific murder. The Italians bit their thumbs at each other; the French had a thousand methods of affront.

Happily for David, with the fine clothes his fellow-countrymen imported from the continent of Europe, they had not as yet annexed, as a popular fashion, the Continental duello; otherwise, the lad's haughty bearing, the defiant way in which he looked about him, his physical protests against being jostled in the streets, more especially in Paul's Walk, had procured him quick and frequent challenge.

It was not David's intention to assume an air of pride and arrogance, for he was a modest-minded fellow; but his new and gay surroundings, freedom from the narrowness of shipboard, the bright May morning, his first visit to the capital, and a certain push of confident manliness fostered by his successful prowess in the overthrow of the Papist spy at Exmouth, not forgetting his hope of seeing Lucy, buoyed him up into a fever of elation. At the same time his Christian education and his naturally reverent regard for an edifice dedicated to the worship of God made Paul's Walk, in his estimation, a scandal

and a grievance. If the money-changers in the Temple had moved the meek and gentle Saviour into the only exhibition of mere human passion that marked His gracious career, what would have been His feelings in view of the desecration of the cathedral church of Paul's in the Puritan days of Queen Elizabeth? Some such thought passed through David Yarcombe's mind as he wandered about the sacred edifice, pausing now and then to note the vice of it and the smallness of the corner that was set apart for devotional exercises.

The choir alone was devoted to religious services. Everywhere else trade and commerce, huckstering, roystering, and vile traffic of all kinds went on. Philip and Mary, in their time, had forbidden the passage of horses and mules through the church. Elizabeth had made it a penal offence to draw swords or shoot with hand-gun or dag therein. Nor were agreements to be made for the payment of money in the church. Nevertheless, all this was done, and more; a strange thing, considering that under Philip and Mary a revival of Papal ceremonial had taken place. Candles had been lighted in the chapels and masses said for the dead; yet the traffic of the streets had invaded the nave and aisles. And now, as David Yarcombe saw it, the candles had disappeared, the pictures over the altars were torn down, and the whole church, with the exception of the choir, as we have said, was given up to the basest uses.

In the middle aisle he was jostled by a motley crowd, in every kind of picturesque attire. The costuming of the people made no impression upon him, since it was but an exaggeration of the dress of the coast and towns of his native county; russet doublet and hose, the sleeves sometimes with points through which the shirt protruded, sometimes only slashed at the elbow, the shirts worn low in the neck. Old Blatchford, for example, had a stomacher,

over which the doublet was laced, and he wore a long coat or gown with loose-hanging sleeves and a hood, turn-over collar of velvet, and broad-toed shoes. When men rode, they wore high boots to the knees. In the female costume the principal features were the slashing of the sleeves, the square cut of the bodice in the neck, and the laced stomachers or vests. Low head-dresses vainly competed with tall. Elizabeth flung her elaborate construction of wig and precious stones into the scale, and the pretty caul of gold network with flowing hair was bumped out of vogue; though rich girdles with chains remained by way of ornament.

From skimpy skirts to balloon-like arrangements of stiff brocades, the Tudor dress varied, as ladies' fashions usually do; and there were added an embarrassing collection of ready-made garments brought from over the seas by purchase or by sack of cities and loot of ships. As they do to this day, women as well as men wore waistcoats. Men of fashion were veritable popinjays of rich and eccentric attire; doublets full of basses or skirts, short full cloaks, broad rolling collars of fur or velvet, long tightly fitting hose, caps burdened with feathers or Milan bonnets, shoes slashed and puffed, all of the most magnificent description; jewelled-hilted daggers, diamond rings. If this costuming was more or less typical, it had nevertheless many changes and contrasts of caps and feathers; and ruffs instead of collars. Then there were soldiers, with their helmet-like headpieces, and metal breastplates, their long swords, and jingling harness; sailors, something between private citizens and regimental commanders, with barbaric decorations of gold chains, strange feathers, sheathed knives, or Spanish swords, as the fancy might dictate. Against this show and glitter should be offset the sober gowns of lawyers and Churchmen.

Imagine a grand parade of these costumes, worn by men

and women to the manner born, not self-conscious and awkward, as you might see them to-day in a stage-play: lawyers, Churchmen, hucksterers, pedlars, harlots, gulls, thieves, adventurers, young gallants, and old procuresses; honest women, too, with young husbands, out for the day, and younger beaux with marriageable mistresses, sailors from the Spanish Main, soldiers fresh from battle in the Netherlands, mock-soldiers who had never fought, mock-sailors ignorant of the sea—imagine such a concourse, mingled with retailers of nicknacks, fruits, and confections; all busy, gossiping, trading, plotting, the vocal music of a religious chaunt penetrating at intervals the hum and buzz of the worthless crowd; then you may realise how it might puzzle and shock David Yarcombe, enthusiastic, proud of his country, and religiously brought up. . . . But let it be said for those unparalleled days of excitement and romance, that there were not wanting, even in Paul's Walk at its worst, men and women worthy of the nation's highest aspirations; some of them going to such service as was held in the choir, others returning therefrom, staid citizens on their way to business, Churchmen of earnest lives. If some few captains and adventurers in foreign trade and discovery found recruits in Paul's Walk, these were never without a leaven of such as were of noble ambition and men of probity and honour. . . . For weal or woe, there is a Paul's Walk in every great port of the world, if you are seeking the relation of irresponsible crowds outside the ordinary paths of respectability. One may question, after all, whether Piccadilly Circus, in the Victorian Era, presents a less demoralising scene at night than did Paul's Walk in the daytime three hundred years ago; on the other hand, it certainly is not a tithe as picturesque as the promenade of Paul's must have been.

Once David had to decline the companionship of two razed hussies, in low bodices and with that dead-alive

tow-hair that has been the mark of infamy even in our own time.

At another less happy moment, as it transpired, David had to resist a hard-pressed invitation to repair to an adjacent tavern and drink a cup of sack.

"Nay, an you will not drink, mayhap you'll fight, honest countryman?" said a swashbuckler villain, backed up by a couple of equally evil-looking ruffians.

"I only fight with the enemies of my country," said David calmly; "and I'll be bound, good friend, you are none."

"I am that man's enemy who offers me offence," said the man of ostentatious hospitality.

"And in what have I offended?" asked David.

"To flout me and my polite invitation is to put upon me a base and damned affront, my master. 'Twould be other, perchance, in thy beggarly country; but you must learn, my Jack Pudding of the Fens, that among us, the nobility of the metropolis, to invite is to command. 'Tis thine to choose, 'twixt sword and sack."

"I choose neither, and bid ye a good-day," said David, turning aside; at which moment a ruffian snatched at his well-filled pouch, but was hit squarely on the mouth and sent sprawling, while David, posting himself against one of the pillars in the aisle, drew upon the others, and looked so formidable that the ruffians fell back; and a stranger interposed, one evidently in authority.

"'Tis against the law to draw in Paul's," he said. "Put up your sword, young sir; and as for you——"

But as he was about to address David's cowardly assailants, they quietly dispersed.

The stranger, taking David's arm, led him from the place, and, while denouncing the vices and follies of the day, carried him to the very tavern whither the braggart ruffian from whom he had escaped would himself have

brought him ; for the professed friend was no other than a confederate.

"Though we fight with Spain," said the stranger, courteously offering David a seat, "we know how to honour her industries and to salute her daughter. Saith the poet, 'Jerez,' for which read sack, 'is the daughter of Seville'; let us pay court to the donnacella. Drawer, a bowl of sack ; and, prithee, a manchet of bread and a platter of cheese, to qualify the same and comfort the stomach."

The drawer smiled, and answered with alacrity ; and the stranger cast him down a gold piece, and bade him buy a ribbon for his mistress with the change.

"Fill our cups, good Ganymede," he continued, addressing the drawer in his flowery fashion, "until the golden bubbles o'ertop the rims. . . . That's well. . . . And now, young sir, in the righteous fashion of the time I crave to pledge you first, that suspicion of poison in the cup be null and void ; . . . 'tis a villainous thought, . . . but these are days of treachery. . . . Long life, and many adventures !"

He drained the cup, and David raised his own with a pious toast: "By the Grace of God, may evil hap ever find a ready friend !"

"And ready friend as brave a youth," the stranger rejoined, while David emptied his beaker.

"'Tis a powerful wine," he said, pressing his lips together, rather frowningly, than to commend it.

"The only drink for heroes," said his host.

David broke a crust of bread and munched it.

The stranger helped himself to cheese, and, inviting the drawer to fill the cups again, tossed off another measure and smacked his lips. David put forth his hand, then drew it back, and looked at his host.

"You drink it with a relish."

"And when I cannot, may the gods recall me from this petty sphere of roguery and remorse."

"Wouldst lead me into the air, kind friend? I feel faint."

"Into the air! With pleasure, young sir. But whither would'st thou?"

"To Durham House," said David, his conscience pricking him that he had not on landing first sought to know whether Lucy had arrived in town.

"To Durham House?" repeated the stranger.

"How far is it hence?"

"A mere step; by Ludgate to the Strand, by boat a few splashes of the oars. But why to Durham House?"

David made no reply, but strove to rise to his feet.

"Art not well, dear friend?" asked his host.

"Nay, I am sick unto fainting," said David, lying back in his chair. . . . "The room grows dark. . . . I fear I must have taken some hurt. . . . Give me air."

He raised his hands towards his head, fell forward upon the table, and presently collapsed; whereupon the drawer came forward, and with him the first ruffian who had assailed David in the church. With calm deliberation they unstrapped his pouch, and divided its contents between them.

"The remainder for the general good," said the professed friend of the poor lad; "'tis a sword of value."

He drew David's weapon and lashed the air with it, while the others unbuckled his belt, and removed his jerkin and vest and a trinket or charm which their victim wore about his neck. The first ruffian examining this and removing several fine rings from David's hands, the drawer proceeded to strip him to his shirt. Unlacing his vest, he had not noticed the knife that Master Sidmouth Trevelion had given him on board ship; a weapon fashioned something like a dagger, but of more primitive form and very plainly sheathed. Fastened by a strap to the lower part of the vest, it came undone and slipped into the upper part of David's left-leg boot, and there remained.

Voices of newly arrived comrades in an adjacent room quickened the proceedings of the ruffians. One of them taking David by the heels another by the head, they carried him from the room and deposited him, all of a heap, in an outer yard; possibly with the intention, later, of disposing of him in the Fleet river that ran hard by, or thrusting him into the street—a more merciful proceeding, since in that case he might have been picked up by the watch and, if living, provided with shelter and a leech.

CHAPTER II

DAVID IN THE ASSASSINS' DEN

THE ruffians of Paul's Walk had not reckoned with the stout constitution of their victim. Nor had they counted upon their proceedings being somewhat hastened at the last moment by a disturbance among the band. The voices that had sharpened their final movements were in dispute over other booty than that of which they had despoiled their latest victim.

This rendered necessary the presence of the chief who had played the part of the benevolent host, and for the moment, drew further attention from David; but only for the moment, seeing that among the crew there was one who, with his jaw bound up, was eager for revenge.

The concoction with which David's cup had been lined, though not a potent poison, was a heavy narcotic, sufficient in the experience of his murderous assailants to ensure insensibility for several hours at least. David proved an exception to their diagnoses of previous cases. The pure red blood of Devon and the muscular strength that comes of healthful exercise fought for him, and the fresh air of heaven soon began to throw off the effects of the drug. He awoke with a cold wind blowing upon his face and lifting his tangled hair. His memory began to take vague shape of the actualities of his position. He felt for his sword. It was gone. His instinct at once told him that it was useless to feel for his purse. But,

deep down in his left boot, he came upon his knife. The touch of it acted like a magnet upon his shattered nerves. The spring of hope leaped into his heart. When presenting him with the knife, Master Trevelion had said : "It has been a good friend to me ; take it, and in case of need it may serve thee also ; for, while we are servants of the Lord, we are men of war ; and I beg thee put on thy boots, they are more meet for the slimy mud and filth of the London streets than such shoon as bucks may wear at Court ; and if good fortune should bring thee to Sir Walter Raleigh, to whom I have commended thee, it will heighten his regard to see thee wisely attired ; for, though he delighteth in fine raiment and silken hose, he hath an eye for what is practical in such as serve Her Majesty upon the sea."

The master's characteristic speech and warning flashed through David's mind, and he almost chuckled as he clutched the knife. He found it difficult to get upon his feet ; for he had been flung down upon the ground without regard to the possibility of dislocating his limbs. The air might well feel keen, now that he had nothing but his shirt and boots to temper the wind to the shorn lamb. "A lamb that may yet play the wolf, by God's justice," he said to himself, as the consolatory biblical text occurred to him ; "and surely, 'tis not by His gracious will that I shall not escape hence."

Night was coming on apace. There was sufficient of the twilight left for him to reconnoitre the place, as he leaned against a cold stone wall. He was in the open air ; that was something to his advantage. The wall, that shut him in on one side, was tall and thick. In a corner was an immense water-butt, under the gable of a half-ruined building ; and then came the room whence he had been carried. There was a fitful light burning within, but the rest of the yard was in darkness.

David now proceeded to feel for some possible protuberance in the wall that might assist him in an attempt to scale it. While he was in the act, a door was opened by a man who came into the yard holding before him a lantern, by the light of which David thought he recognised the ruffian who had attempted to steal his purse in the church; a burly, truculent rogue, the lower part of whose face was now bound up with a cloth. David slipped down upon his knees, and remained huddled up, as if helpless. He knew it was no good pretending insensibility or death, for the man had seen him move; the which he speedily signified by a grunt and a volley of abuse.

"You damned hell-hound!" he exclaimed, as he held up the lantern, the better to see his prisoner. "Coming to, are ye? I'll pay you for a broken jaw, my whelp of hell; and that's the pit you'll come to, when I've done with you."

He emphasised this sulphurous threat with a kick, and then stooped to place his lantern upon the floor, the prologue to his murderous operations.

The next moment he received a shock that was a greater surprise for him than the thump of David's fist in the church. As he deposited his lantern close by the lad, and spread his legs as if for firm footing while he reached for his dagger, David deftly thrust his head underneath the ruffian's body and flung him clean over his head; the would-be assassin coming down upon his back with a thud that shook the water-butt and forced from the human lump a roar equal to the bellow of a stricken ox.

In a moment David was upon him, his hand at his throat. The villain made but a poor fight of it; as well he might, hampered with a half-broken neck. The lamb was as wolfish as an accustomed and hardened soldier might have been. At the sound of footsteps he slipped his knife between the ruffian's ribs, dragged off his jerkin,

and got into it, unbuckled the villain's sword and belted it round his own waist. Then, with the cool *sang froid* of a far older hand, groped for the dead man's purse, found it, took up the lantern, and met, almost face to face, ruffian number one. They had heard their comrade's cry in the thieves' assembly room, and counted it as the consummation of vengeance which they had not cared to deny to offended pride and a broken jaw.

"Done with him, comrade?" was the challenge.

"And for him," grunted David.

"He made cry enough to be heard at the gates of St. Peter," was the reponse, and David passed on.

He groped his way through a dank, cell-like place, and came to a heavy oaken stairway, dimly lighted. A hue and cry was raised behind him. His tragic ruse had been discovered. Instead of the body of their dupe, they had dragged into the light the corpse of their comrade.

David fled up the stairway to find it defended by a couple of armed sentinels. Dashing his lantern into the face of one, he struck the other with his knife, and rushed past them. There was still enough light for him to see that he was in a narrow stone corridor. It led to an open doorway. There were niches in the walls, and loopholes, as if the building had been a fortress. He hurried onwards, urged by the rattle of quick footsteps behind him, and a murmur of voices. As he sped through the doorway he turned and pulled the door, which swung into its sockets with a noise that started echoes all around him. Another narrow corridor; then a chamber without, apparently, any means of exit. There was a window. He rushed for it. A faint light came in from a lantern hung high in a street or passage-way without. The window had no opening. From such hurried glance as he was permitted, it seemed as if it had a drop of many feet to the ground. While he was deliberating whether he should attempt to

force it, the door he had closed was flung open, and two of his pursuers dashed into the room. One of them posted himself before the archway entrance to the apartment; the other closed in upon the fugitive. David manœuvred to get his back to such light as there was, and, sword in one hand, knife in the other, prepared to sell his newly rescued life dearly.

Quickness of sight is of great moment in a combat with swords; but David had to feel with his point rather than see with his eyes, though he had the advantage over his adversaries, inasmuch as he could see, now and then, both their faces, and thus judge their distances. They attacked him with great care and deliberation, unwilling to risk an unnecessary scratch. In such an encounter intellectual superiority counts for something, and David had them there. Keen observation of what is actually taking place, a knowledge of one's own resources, and acquaintance with combinations of attack and repulse, are important considerations. David was a master, in his way, of such knowledge as was taught and practised in battle. Ere duelling came in as a fashionable accomplishment, he had learnt the use of both sword and dagger.

This doubling of weapons was not altogether new to the two bravos, who paraded with deadly intent, the one on guard, the other almost immediately at the thrust. Gradually coming to close quarters, they plied David with many a wary feint and many a keen and subtle thrust and head-blow. They had at once realised the sort of swordsman they had to deal with. His overthrow of their fellow-thief, whose jaw he had first broken and then, deluding their chief, had sent him to his account, gasconading now in his very jerkin and meeting them with his looted sword, might well make them treat him with a certain show of respect.

Neither of them spoke while they fought. David

catching their points with marvellous dexterity, continually on the defensive, left to them the peril as well as the power of attack. After a while the business became a trifle monotonous, and David, distinguishing at brief intervals the sound of other footsteps, made a sudden and startling diversion. Dashing between the two, he slashed one of them fiercely across the face, while he struck up the other's sword with his dagger, and again stood upon the defensive, resolved, however, to waste no more time. Furthermore, he had raised the devil in his bleeding assailant, who now, with groans and curses, came blindly on, his companion pausing for a moment to listen; and David distinctly heard the oncoming of other pursuers. He backed to the wainscoted wall of the chamber, the better to avoid a new plan of attack by the more wary of his two assailants; who approached him, as it were, by a flank movement, and succeeded in pricking him shrewdly in his dagger-arm. David darted upon him and hit him fairly in the breast, but had to retreat before the blind fury of slash and thrust that made the other adversary more dangerous than when he considered his strokes and dealt them warily.

David had now to fall back once more, beginning to feel that his case was desperate; when, at the moment of the arrival of fresh adversaries, the wall gave way, and he fell through the sudden opening of a panel, which closed upon him with a click like the sound of a hand-gun.

CHAPTER III

GOOD SAMARITANS, THOUGH PAPISTS

HIS sword went clattering upon the floor ; but he still clutched his knife. He lay for some minutes half-stunned. Then, finding he was alone, and that his enemies vainly thundered against his new defence, he lay still, and thought and listened, his heart beating with his exertions, his breath coming in gasps, the warm blood trickling down his arm. It was restful to lie still. A prayer of gratitude to God rose to his lips.

It was evidently a panel of enormous thickness that had been his salvation. The strokes of the villains' sword-hilts and their voices sounded quite afar off. It must surely have been a panel of stone. No mere wood, even of the toughest oak, could withstand the blows that were showered upon it. Now his curiosity was aroused, as well as his anxiety to make the best of his sudden stroke of good fortune. He rose to his feet, picked up his sword, and looked about him. He was in a half-ruined hall or chamber of solid stone. It was lighted by day with a deep oriel window, now broken and open to the sky, and, furthermore, by a kind of turret, that had been partly destroyed. The night was clear and bright, and the stars were shining in at both apertures. He found that he had fallen clean over a short flight of steps. But there was no sign of door or opening of any kind above, nor any indication of wainscoting or wood ; so that the trap or panel, that had given

way as he backed against it, hard pressed by his adversaries, must have been of stone, disguised on the other side by panelled walls of oak. David sat down upon the steps, took off his jerkin, and, tearing open the sleeve of his shirt, endeavoured to bind up his wound. He was not very successful, and the loss of blood brought on a slight giddiness. "No, no, David," he said to himself, "no more fainting; up, and on, lad. What's yonder?"

There was a glimmer of light, at the end of a narrow way that led from the stone chamber to what might be an outlet to the street. He had evidently entered the ruin of some monastery or religious house that King Henry had degraded and dismantled. There were many such, he knew, in the metropolis, as there were in other parts of the kingdom.

For a little while he thought the light was a star, shining through a broken casement; but, as he went towards it, he saw that it came through the chink of a doorway, a key-hole, or, perchance, through a not wholly drawn curtain. Presently he heard voices singing a chaunt, and a breath of some strange perfume crept into the close air. He advanced nearer; touched a heavy screen of cloth or tapestry, and listened. Low and subdued voices of men and women, making responses to a single voice; and then the chaunt again.

"Surely a Papist service!" he said. "But, if they pray to a woman, they still acknowledge the same God as we!"

Then he bethought him of the spy whom he had slain at Exmouth, and the cruel revelations of the Inquisition which he had listened to on the quay at Dartmouth, and had verified by the wounds on old Liberty Dent's body. He was sorely troubled; yet he found the music comforting and was loth to interrupt it. He persuaded himself that God had brought him thither that his life might be saved from murderous hands. The ways of God were mysterious; and after all, a Papist was a human being. He had under-

stood that the parents of Sir Walter Raleigh himself were Roman Catholics. Whether he was inclined to debate the matter further or not, his acute sense of hearing caught what might be the sounds of further pursuit. At all events, he had less to fear from men and women on their knees at the foot of the Cross, than from bloodthirsty bandits ; so, feeling his way through the heavy draperies that shut in the little secret chapel, he burst in upon the worshippers. They were four—two women, a priest, and a grey-beard ; the latter rose to his feet, his hand upon his sword ; the priest fled to the protection of the women, who had flung themselves into each other's arms.

"Sanctuary !" exclaimed David. "I come in peace, a fugitive from assassins !"

The younger of the women, a pale, shrinking, beautiful creature, unwound her arms from her mother, and fixed her dark eyes, with inquiring wonder, upon David ; who clutched the heavy curtain of the portière, as he blinked at the altar, that shone with lights and flowers.

"Whence come you ?" asked the old gentleman, who now drew his long velvet cloak about him, hiding his sword, and pushing back his grey hair. "Speak quickly. Are you pursued ?"

"Yes," said David ; but, noticing the terror with which his answer was received, he added, "not to this sanctuary. I am here by a miracle. Entrapped, I escaped by many winding ways from a low tavern by Paul's, and fighting my way yonder, beyond the outer chamber of your chapel, the wall opened for me and I was saved."

"God be praised !" said the old man. "There are strange contrivances and secret passages in this old place that we wot not of ; that which you describe is surely miraculous ; if not you shall make us better acquainted with it, when you are strong enough to lead and advise us ; but now you are faint from your wounds."

He had no sooner spoken and pointed to David's bandaged arm than the poor lad gave way. Sick at heart, weak, weary and worn, he became emotional. The tears welled up into his eyes. Vainly endeavouring to hide them, he turned aside and straightened himself with a painful effort.

"You are a gentleman," said the priest, coming forward, "and we will trust you."

"I am a Puritan of the Puritans," said David, "yet I will trust *you*."

It was a strange show of pride for the lad to make at such a moment ; but he was pretty well spent as he made it.

"My good sisters in Christ will conduct you hence, and nurse you back to health, if it shall please the God we both serve, Puritan and Catholic," said the priest, with diplomatic caution, "one in the right way, the other perchance in the wrong ; but there is no question of theology between us ; the Good Samaritan is an easy part to play, and is blessed of heaven. But we are all in peril from cruel men ; we more so than you ; and before you go hence you will swear, by what you regard as most holy, never to reveal what you may see or hear in this place, or in any other in which you accept our hospitality."

"I swear it, by the memory of my mother, and by the wounds of Christ our Lord !"

"Amen !" said the priest ; and "Amen !" repeated the two ladies as they led the poor fellow away, while priest and knight proceeded to investigate the mystery of the moving wall.

Book III

DURHAM HOUSE AND WHITEHALL

CHAPTER I

THE LOVE STORY OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND
BESSIE THROCKMORTON

DURHAM HOUSE was one of the magnificent old Strand palaces. Its courtyard was as gay with flowers as its gardens. Before even Sir Walter Raleigh graced it with his occupancy it had been endowed with historic dignity. Founded by Anthony de Beck, patriarch of Jerusalem, it was rebuilt by Bishop Hatfield. Of handsome proportions, its turrets and gables out-rivalled the somewhat squat proportions of Whitehall, whose river terraces and pleasure gardens, however, far outshone the immediate environment of the Raleigh mansion. . . . The water-gate of Durham House had seen great times and sad. We can only pique the reader's imagination by a passing suggestion of the gay brilliant and reckless character of the times, reflected in its dress and manners, the swagger of the soldier, the polished politeness of the courtier, the picturesqueness of the Queen's meanest subjects, the brave coming and going of foreign ambassadors and sea-rovers; the latter decked

in the spoil of their plumed, bejewelled, and plundered adversaries. . . . What a pageant it was that had heralded Lady Jane Grey's departure from Durham House, to be proclaimed Queen at the Tower, and (alas, poor innocent !) to be afterwards beheaded there, with her husband and her proud, haughty, and misguided uncle, Northumberland ! . . . What fasting of Henry VIII. by the challengers of the jousting at Westminster, in 1540 !

Like all palaces of the period, and indeed of all times, it had its grim and ghostly memories. It is not our purpose, however, to raise the shades that Sir Walter Raleigh may be said to have exorcised ; for he was at the zenith of his power, when Master Sidmouth Trevelion waited upon him, a few days after David Yarcombe had been trapped and nearly done for in Paul's Walk.

Trevelion was ushered into the soldier and statesman's private room, his holy of holies, an apartment cut off by various stairways and passages, in the turret of the northern wing of the house ; in which he smoked, and read his books and wrote his poems, studied his maps, cogitated over his far-reaching ambitions, and received stolen visits from one of the ladies of the Court, who loved him with a reckless devotion. She gave him audience, when opportunity offered, at Whitehall ; and he made occasions for her visits to Durham House, in the disguise of one of her maids, a secrecy they both deemed necessary, having regard to the Queen's vain and tyrannical attitude towards love bestowed or professed for any other lady than herself within the circle of the Court. . . . Master Trevelion might have heard the rustle of a petticoat as the heavy curtains of an adjoining cabinet were drawn, almost at the moment of his entrance.

It was a characteristic picture that presented itself to the serious old mariner's gaze, as he was ushered into the room by a confidential member of the Queen's guard in his

gorgeous uniform. On State occasions Raleigh, as the captain, wore a suit of silver armour; and his daily attire was elaborate to foppishness. It was well there was a great heart under his vest of pinked silk, and on his shoulders an exceptional head and weighty brain, that neutralised what might otherwise have been counted for coxcombry. Moreover, it was the fashion of the day to dress ostentatiously and at mighty cost. Her Majesty delighted in fine clothes, and looked to see her ministers and police officials magnificently attired.

Master Trevelion did not pause to take marked note of the appointments of the room or the gay apparel of its owner; but we may pause for a moment to realise the scene. Sir Walter, a commanding figure always, rose from a table strewn with manuscripts, plans, drawings, and superbly bound books, and greeted his Exmouth friend. The Queen's favourite stood six feet in his shoes, that were buff, tied with white silk ribbons. He wore a white satin pinked vest, close-sleeved to the wrist, and over the body of it a brown doublet, finely flowered and embroidered with pearls. His belt was of the same colour and ornament, and it carried a jewelled-hilted sword. On the other side, over the right hip, obstructed the pommel of a dagger. His white satin trunks, or breeches, with his stockings and ribbon-garters, were fringed at the ends. He carried his finery with an unconscious grace of strength. His hair was short, his beard neatly trimmed to a point, his moustache plain and without curl or twist. There was a steadfast fearless expression in his steel-grey eyes; his forehead was white and broad, his lips firm but not thin, his manner frank, gracious and eager. In his presence most men felt his superiority. His enemies, and they were many, held him in fear, and contrived against him secretly.

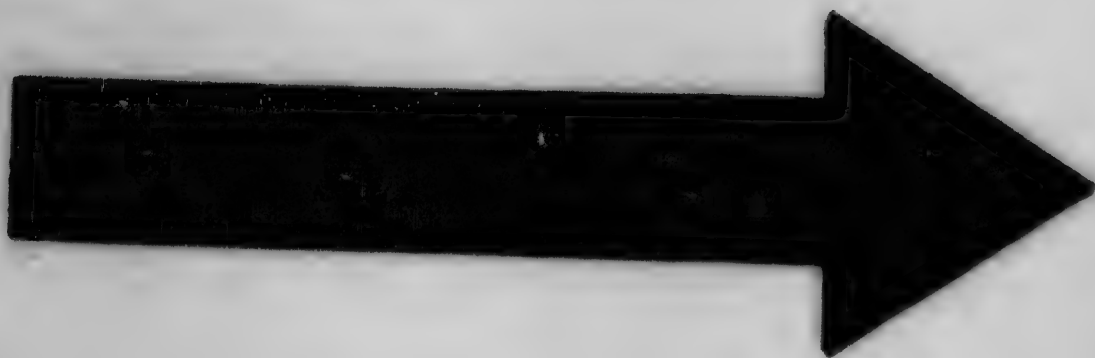
Trevelion, not lacking in the courage that prompted Raleigh to great deeds, was a man of an entirely different

kidney; dogged, fanatical, overbearing, but of a deep earnestness; hating the Spaniards as keenly as Raleigh, but possessed of a more robust and primitive faith in God, the faith that asks God to do things that calls for His blessing in a business-like way, as the Primitive Methodists in our own time, taking the Almighty into their confidence in matters of commerce and trading enterprises. Trevelion was attired in the most sober of russet cloth, doublet and trunks of the same, but with fine leather boots, and yet with a ruff something of the pattern of Sir Walter's, and a straight sword or rapier, with a Spanish hilt. He had the manner of one who has other business in the world than to think of what may be the pattern of a doublet or the trimming of a vest; a broad, strong, tanned face, a square short forehead, a carelessly barbered beard that straggled and was grey, and a bullet-head of thick hair—a man to have as a friend, and to be wary of as an enemy; one who talked well, and had a natural gift of oratory; made to command a sailor and a soldier: and the two were very much combined in those days of war and adventure.

"You are right welcome, old friend," said Sir Walter, taking his visitor's hand with a genial grip; "sit mun down, as our Devon lingo hath it."

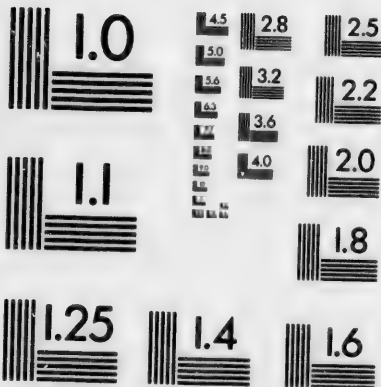
"Nay; leifer would I stand for the nonce, Sir Walter, for a glimpse of this view of the noble river," Trevelion answered, gazing with admiration upon the silent highway with its varied traffic and its fringe of undulating meadows and woods.

It was nigh upon high tide. A June afternoon, when London burnt wood. The sky was as high and blue as it is to this day in Italy. In the foreground of the opposite shore, lighters filled with hay, wood, and grain broke the line of the banks. There never was a time when there were not hay-boats on the Thames. They are almost as picturesque now as they were then. All else is sordid,



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prosaic, black, compared with the Tudor days of the beautiful river. Like love, any kind of enjoyment comes best in couples. Raleigh delighted to have the river appreciated by his old Devon friend, and watched him as Trevelion gazed and smiled and hummed and haahed his approval. Boats of many kinds passed up and down stream; those going with the slackening tide being mostly content with such way as was made without oar or sail. There were pleasure barges, as stately and as gay as the gilded boats of Venice. Gliding between them, and steering clear of much smaller craft, there were broad-beamed row-boats and wherries filled with pretty ladies, some of them having minstrels in attendance. One boat passed with a party of choristers singing a madrigal. The river was the great highway of London in those days, and in summer it was a holiday stream, through the town, as much as its upper reaches are to-day from Windsor to Henley. There were swans, too, on these town waters, and the river was as bright and clear as the course of a good life.

"'Tis a fair aspect, truly," said Raleigh, "but will not compare with many rivers you have seen in the Indies, or with our own Dart."

"Dart and Exe live in a man's heart. But anchoring in the Thames, a man feels the pulse of the world beating, as 'twere, at his keel; it is what Jerusalem was to the Israelites."

"Nay; more like the Tiber to the Romans," said Raleigh quickly. "As they tuned their harps to her war-like music, so we catch our breath at the whisper of Old Thames, and with the badge of Elizabeth in our caps——"

"And the love of God in our hearts," interposed Trevelion.

"We set about the conquest of the world for His glory.

That is your thought, I know," said Raleigh. "Well, now, having braced ourselves with brave words," he continued, with a smile, and taking his visitor's broad hand once more, "let us to our affairs."

"Firstly," said Trevelion, seating himself opposite Raleigh, who moved his papers and leaned his face in his hands to listen, "the young man I writ of in my letters is lost to me. Four days ago he left the *Saint Paul*, to see the town and bring my commendations to you, whiles I set about the discharge of my cargo and sought to know when 'twould be convenient for our council. I found thou wert in close attendance upon Her Majesty on important affairs of State, and might not therefore care to be disturbed; so I e'en took occasion to hunt up my passenger and friend, but, alas, to no purpose. He was to have come back to the ship at night; he is still absent. I traced him to Paul's Walk, and beyond discovery of a trap laid for his innocence I am at fault; he is either dead or held prisoner; or, perhaps, lies wounded in some tavern; this is a matter that most concerns me now."

"'Twas he that slew the traitorous spy, Brentanio, otherwise Kennoek, otherwise Clutterbuck?"

"The same."

"A mighty service to the State; shalt have whatever aid your wisdom may reckon of advantage to find the lad. Some fair lady, perchance, hath lured him away, and will let him loose when his purse is empty."

"Nay; he is bound to a Devon beauty in chains of steel."

"Is't so, indeed? All honour to the lad. I cry him mercy."

"And 'twas on her account I sent him hither; in the hope that, whether you did deign to receive him or not, he might at least be on the right spot to be informed of her whereabouts. She is one Mistress Lucy Withycombe, of

Littleham ; cousin to a certain fair lady of whom, 'tis said, she hath thy heart in her keeping."

Raleigh withdrew his elbows from the table, and leaned back in his chair.

"You speak in riddles."

"Do I so? Then they be the easiest to unravel of any problems a man might propound to you, most excellent friend," Trelvelion replied, with a smile of grave amusement.

"I care not for riddles that may pleasure old wives or Court gossips. You were wont to be frank ; what have you in your thoughts that needs disguise?"

"I am but a poor hand at flattery or felicitation, and the ways of lovers and the like ; but there will be rejoicings in Devon when Mistress Throckmorton shares thy knight-hood, and——"

"God's blood !" exclaimed Raleigh. "What treason is this?"

"Treason !"

"Aye ! Black treason, and scandal most malign."

"Why, even that rogue, Kennoek, had knowledge of it," said Trelvelion.

"Knowledge of what?"

"The betrothal of Mistress Bessie Throckmorton to Sir Walter Raleigh."

"Curses light upon his lying soul in hell !" said Raleigh.

Trelvelion had never believed until now that Raleigh could storm and rage and be white with passion. Imperious, and at times angered, and with fitting words to give tongue to his rage ; but to be beside himself, to blaspheme and storm like a bandit in his cups, 'twas most wonderful.

"That I know aught of Mistress Throckmorton more than of any other lady of the Court ! That she is betrothed to me ! That 'tis the talk of Devon ! That thy cub of Exe comes here to—to—to—what was he to come for?"

Sir Walter strode about the room, vainly endeavouring to resist the fury into which his anger had thrown him.

"Mistress Lucy Withycombe is the companion and friend of Mistress Bessie Throckmorton; and my cub of the Exe, who hath slain thy foe and the Queen's, was well advised that, if his Lucy had arrived in town, his most eminent, wise, and excellent Captain of Her Gracious Majesty's guard would e'en comfort the cub with knowledge of the sweet young lady's lodgings," Trevelion replied, catching something of the quarrelsome tone of his enraged host.

"By heaven, you do well to mock me, Trevelion! But neither the slaughter of forty Brentanios, nor the capture of forty galleons piled with plate, could set off the defeat that may come of your blunt assertion. 'Twere better your passenger should have his quietus, as you fear, than he should have come hither, or gone to Whitehall, with his damned love stories and his message from the dead spy, who could not be more shrewdly avenged."

"Sir Walter," said Trevelion, with more of pity than anger in his voice, "I would have doubted the word of a saint from heaven, had he vouchsafed to describe thee in this mood and manner. 'Tis well I am thy friend; and I will still give myself that honoured, if not sacred, name, assured there is that behind this frenzy that may give it justification. Be round and honest with me, as becomes thee; or let me say farewell, for never felt I so debased, to think that so great and virtuous a captain could sink to so low a level of poor humanity.

"Ah! there you hit the mark, Trevelion," Sir Walter replied, wiping the sweat from his brow. "Be patient with me; 'tis that we are human after all makes us superior to the gods. Heaven forgive me! Canst keep a secret, the divulging of which may wreck us all?"

"If thou so doubttest me that thou art compelled to ask

the question—nay, 'fore God keep thy secret, and let me hence," replied Trevelion, with a frown.

"Perhaps 'twere better so," said Raleigh. "Come to me again to-morrow at this time; I have news for you as great as yours to me, but I'm not in the mood. Canst never know how sad is my heart. . . . Yet never did the world prosper better with me. . . . Your great pure soul could not understand, were I to tell you what a strange and jealous nature disturbs the great and noble mistress whom we serve. . . . Nevertheless, you are man enough to imagine how one may live at odds with a Court ruled by a Vestal Virgin Queen, whom God send all happiness and power and good fortune. . . . Come again to-morrow, and shalt know more. . . . Then we will to our affairs in sober earnest. . . . But forget what I have said, and pardon my discourtesy; for I love you, Trevelion, and you shall not love me less when you know me truly——"

"May God, 'to Whom all hearts are open and from Whom no secrets are hid,' have thee in His keeping," said Trevelion, pressing Raleigh's hand. "As for me, if I have seen thy brow clouded for the nonce, I have remembrance of the sunshine of thy heart; be assured always of my loyal friendship."

"I am assured," said Raleigh. "Let me show you the way, and provide you with a force shall help to find your passenger; and when found, I would have you bring him straightway to me. . . . There is a talisman shall open my door to you at all times;" and whispering a password in Trevelion's ear, Sir Walter accompanied him to a small room at the foot of a short flight of stairs, and there gave command to a soldier on guard to see Master Sidmouth Trevelion armed with authority for the escort and aid he desired, to scour the town in search of David Yarcombe.

Then, turning back with slow and measured steps to his private room, he drew the curtain that had rustled at

Trevelion's entrance, opened a second door, and whispered :
"Bessie—Bessie—Bessie, my love!"

In another moment she was in his arms; a woman younger than he, with a round, happy, dimpled face, wide-apart, languishing eyes, rippling wavy hair, and a generous mouth, from whence came the ejaculation, "Walter!" calling forth, in a tone of affectionate anxiety, the response, "My darling!"

"What's the matter, dear?" she asked, disengaging herself from his embrace and looking into his face.

"Why do you ask, my love?"

"Your voice trembled when you did call me."

"'Twas with love of you, sweetheart."

"And the red has paled from your lips."

"I have had news that has fretted me."

"It concerns me?"

"How should aught concerning you fret me?"

"I know not; but were it aught else, it would have vanished at my coming."

"How well your love soundeth my very step. Nay, then listen. We will take sweet counsel together."

CHAPTER II

TWO QUEENS ; ONE UNCROWNED

"YOU are beautiful as you are good, generous as you are sweet," said Raleigh, leading her to a seat where the summer sunshine fell upon them. "I seek your counsel."

"You love me most when there is most danger of our undoing. We are discovered?" she said, with an eager look of inquiry in her eyes.

"It is even so, sweetheart; and methinks 'twere best to throw ourselves at Her Majesty's feet, and ask for grace and pardon."

"That were to bring about your ruin, dear love," she answered. "For me, it matters not; I have no father nor mother to grieve, nor any kith and kin, to feel the pinch of what they might conceive to be my disgrace; but for you, it would e'en be the ruin of all your hopes, the wreck of your ambition."

"To blast your dear life and save my own would give me title to perdition. Do not tempt me to be a worse coward than I am, not long ere this to have declared myself openly, and asked the Queen to permit of our union and the Church to bless it."

"Dear Walter, my true and gracious lord, I forbid you to risk aught for me. Rather let me retire to some private retreat, and leave you to fulfil your mission, plant your colonies, defend the nation, and retain the smiles and favours of the Queen."

"Your devotion makes my love a mercenary passion. I have never known a lie to prosper, nor a liar who was not a coward. It is said, in the Proverbs, that God hateth false lips, and he that speaketh lies shall perish."

"But I have heard you say, nevertheless," she answered, "that, while a liar is odious to God, there would be forgiveness for him who might commit himself thus in the extremity of saving life."

"Nay, 'twere worthy of a Jesuit to so defend myself, and I weary of slavery to one whose foolish vanity I despise, otherwise doing honour to the greatness of her mind, and the power she hath of putting down her royal foot against the encroachments of our enemies. What shall I do? Advise me, my own beloved Bess, the only Bess I am ever like to love or esteem; and yet have I done her the worst disrespect man can contrive against the woman he dotes upon."

"I counsel naught but patience, and to maintain the secrecy of our loves. I counsel thee, dear heart, to hold me as a mere flower by the wayside of thy path, to brighten it in a passing moment, but henceforth to blossom, if need be, solitary; unless, perchance, it should one day, in the fulness of time, be meet for thee to pluck it openly and set it in thy bosom, for all the world to see how thou dost prize it."

"And I have dared deny possession of this purest, sweetest treasure ever man had!" he said, leaving her side to pace the room. "Judas were not more criminal."

"Yet, in argument with Master Stow, I heard you say that Judas had great designs, and would have marshalled Christ to the Imperial throne, and otherwise defend his mistaken zeal," she said, effacing herself with a power of will that her drooping eyes and pout of lip might well deny.

"Nay; dost not see how I am continually seeking to

justify my treason by ill-chosen examples? Urge me no further; let me no longer be a liar——"

"Lovers' lies are thistledown; they count not," she said; "but offences, such as you would offer to the Queen, would be tares to choke all other good seeds, and——"

"Dear heart," Raleigh answered, stopping her mouth with a kiss, "the thistledown carries 'neath its airy wings a no less prolific seed, that would grow and blab in prickly thorns of the stings I have planted in thy fair bosom. For, count it as you will in your unparalleled self-sacrifice, I have done you a cruel wrong; but I will requite you straight, at all hazards."

"You shall not; I will deny it; I will match, with the Queen's, a vanity that shall be nearer madness. I will swear it is your folly doth accuse yourself, by reason of my persecution, my outcry for your love; nay, I will rather make myself the laughing-stock of the Court than an object of pity, and you an easy mark for the shafts of your enemies."

"Such is your love, you would risk your soul to spare me a check of worldly prosperity. Nay, then, I will do my duty."

"Your duty is to grant my every wish, since I have given myself to you, heart and soul, my only regret that myself were not a gift more worthy your acceptance; to humour me, in keeping our secret close, is all I ask for in requital."

"Great God, forgive me!" he said; and took her into his arms and vowed that no earthly power should separate them.

Yet, hardly had she left him and taken boat to Whitehall, than, like Peter in the Divine story, he denied her; not thrice by word, but once in words set down with pen and ink, that still exist to taint his memory. But let it be promptly writ, that it is the only serious blemish on a great

name, a blemish that the world easily forgives, and that Heaven in its mercy cannot fail but find outweighed by subsequent penitence and compensation. . . . Sir Walter was in desperate straits. At the height of his power with a lofty ambition for his country and civilisation, he knew too well that the conditions of success depended upon his retaining the advantage of the Queen's personal favour and countenance. . . . Never lived a sovereign more lavishly endowed with the meanest arts of women; nor any queen of better accomplishments for the government of a nation at the most critical period of its history. . . .

Strange that Providence should select for His work at such a crisis of the world, firstly, a woman, and secondly, one who, if she were not criminal from the point of view of that which we regard as the highest virtue in a woman and the which the Scriptures most demand, was at least immoral in her thoughts, and moved by a vanity that, outraging the laws of nature, set a premium upon vice rather than an example of virtue. She demanded in the men and women of her Court, a discipline of celibacy as strict as that ordained of the Romish Church for the government of priest and nun. The Queen's love stories, her diplomatic triflings with royal suitors, and her complaisant intercourse with her favourite ministers, had there been a Grammont to chronicle them, might have passed for the pernicious romances of a royal Jezebel. Whether she was belied in her own acts, or maligned by the tales of her enemies and the confessions of her lovers, the Muse of History chooses to doubt; so e'en must we. She had great qualities, and evil ones; the latter no less characteristic of the age in which she lived, than the fine impulses that made her reign the most romantic in history. Her throne set about with poets, philosophers, warriors, and statesmen, that, for the first time in three hundred odd years, finds its parallel in that of a still greater Sovereign, Victoria, Queen of

Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of a mighty world which Elizabeth's mariners never dreamed of when they swept the seas of Spain and planted the first English colonies.

If the hand of God is to be noted in all history, shaping the destinies of the world—and who shall doubt it?—it is not for mortal man to question the Almighty's choice of His instruments; yet Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Nero, Napoleon, the Czar Peter, Henry VIII., might well seem pernicious means to great ends; and in our ignorance we may be pardoned for regretting that there had not been in Elizabeth more of the angel and less of the termagant, more of the nobler attributes of women and less of the serpent that did beguile her.

Sir Walter, moved thereto by a mighty design of colonisation, and the knowledge of a vast conspiracy of Spain to overrun England with fire and sword, against which he hoped to be foremost in the Queen's defence, wrote down his own damnation for the time being, in these words following to Lord Cecil:—"If any such thing as marriage were afoot, and I know not what, I would have imparted it to yourself, before any man living; and therefore I pray believe it not, and I beseech you to suppress what you can any such malicious report. For I protest before God, there is none, on the face of the earth, that I would be fastened unto." . . . A lie, a monstrous lie, intended for the Queen; the lie of diplomacy, an unjustifiable means to a justifiable end, as Raleigh himself regarded it; a lie bred of the Queen's immoral and unnatural discipline of her Court, that there should be no love-making but hers, and no marriage whatever; an insane vanity. . . . But she ruled over England by the grace of God; and the great world is the better to-day that her days were long in the land.

CHAPTER III

THE CONFIDENCES AND ANXIETIES OF MISTRESS THROCKMORTON AND LUCY WITHYCOMBE AT THE COURT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

"YOU are sad, dear mistress," said Lucy Withycombe, as Bessie Throckmorton flung herself upon her bed, after a busy day.

"Not so sad as weary," Bessie answered; "but am right glad you love to be at Court."

"Nay, methinks it is a very heaven," said Lucy, sitting upon the edge of her prettily draped couch, and swinging her legs with an airy abandon.

"Be wary of Lord Essex," said her mistress; who, being in great favour with the Queen, had been enabled to advance Lucy to a position at Court that was somewhat unprecedented in one who had come to town with so little pretensions to royal recognition. But Lucy was beautiful, and the Queen was not jealous of good looks in the women of her Court so long as they were simply her satellites, her maiden-slaves and attendants, like Byron's frowsy nuns, "foresworn the dear embrace."

"My most dear mistress," answered Lucy, "I have had no truck with my Lord Essex, nor any other." But she blushed, and the rosy tint became her.

"Call me Bessie," said Mistress Throckmorton; "we are at home with each other here, and shall not forget our blood relationship at any time."

"Dear, sweet Bessie!" said the other, leaping down to her and kissing her hands; and then, being raised by her cousin, embracing her with girlish fervour. "I owe you a world of gratitude."

"Beware of Essex," repeated Bessie, drawing her close to her side; "and of every other man that pays thee the compliment of his eyes or the warmer admiration of his tongue."

"Nay; why art so persistent in advice I surely need not?"

"I sometimes regret that I brought you hither."

"For what fault?"

"For no fault of yours; but for the fault of the times, the unholy atmosphere of this Virgin Court, so called."

"Speak no treason, dearest. Lord Essex saith the very cobble-stones have ears in this plotting town."

"Lord Essex saith so; and wherefore?"

Lucy blushed, and stroked Bessie's hair, and said: "Let me undress thee. I will indeed be thy maid to-night and put thee to bed and talk all the whiles; so shall you not distress yourself with unhappy thoughts, for I see you are troubled."

"I am anxious about your welfare, my child," said Bessie, submitting to Lucy's assistance in disrobing.

"Child!" exclaimed Lucy. "Why, I am not three or four years younger than you, and you look three or four years younger than I."

"Flatterer!" said Bessie, with a smile. "Shouldst get on well at Court, if you were a man, Lucy; for a country-bred lassie, as that Scotch lord called thee, thou'rt very apt."

"I try to learn," said Lucy.

"I saw the Queen's most meek and time-serving slave, Sir Christopher Hatton, pinch your arm as he passed you in the corridor of the Queen's bed-chamber, and was sorry."

"I would fain hope you saw the look I gave him for the liberty he ventured," Lucy replied, with warmth. "I hate him!"

"A discreet person, such as Hatton, would not dare presume so, did he not feel that he had been encouraged."

"Encouraged, dear Bessie, encouraged! I encourage such a bowing and scraping ape as Christopher Hatton!" And she dragged off the bodice of her cousin with more vigour than was necessary.

"Hush, hush, my child! If cobble-stones have ears, what of walls within the palace? . . . But supposing Lord Essex had pinched thy elbow, what kind of a look would you have bestowed upon him?"

"You are angry with me," the conscious beauty replied. "It is not the first time you have chidden me; and yet 'twas by your advice, if not example, I have made my best endeavour to be amiable, and never haughty; and if ever Lord Essex hath been especially gracious to me, it has never been at any time when Her Majesty would be like to observe the polite attention."

"And you resent my calling you child! Oh, Lucy, Lucy, you must learn a little of the art of dissimulation, I fear; must not wear your heart upon your sleeve, as the poet says; must keep thy woman's wit sharp and keen, or be undone. . . . What would David Yarcombe say, if he knew how quickly his pretty sweetheart had become—nay, I will not say a coquette, but what is perhaps even worse, the toast of Court gallants?"

"I know not what you mean," said Lucy, busying herself with the removal of Bessie's elaborate farthingale and undergarments. "Why, dear heart, whiles I have, perforce, taken in the bands of my newest gown, you have let out yours! . . . Why, my own sweet mistress, you——"

"Mind it not, mind it not," Bessie replied, with some trepidation. "I have a sluggish nature, that makes for

flesh, Lucy. . . . Nay, prithee hush ; your ever-active limbs tend to improve your sylph-like figure. . . . As for me. . . . But 'tis good of you to be my maid this night ; would I might ever be so tended ! . . . Oh, my dear sweet coz, I am very unhappy ! ”

She hid her face in Lucy's bosom, and burst into such a passion of sobs and tears that Lucy was greatly alarmed.

“What is it, dear friend, beloved cousin, sweet mistress ? ” she exclaimed. “Let me call your maid, indeed.”

“Not for worlds,” Bessie whispered, between her sobs. “I shall be better presently ; indeed, I am better already. Heed me not ; 'tis good for the heart when the eyes can weep for it. . . . Give me my smock, and let me to bed ; you shall sit by me and talk awhile. . . . Or you shall listen and I will talk, while you undress.”

“You are unhappy,” Lucy answered, assisting her to climb the tall, funereal-looking bed, with its four posts and its heavy hangings that were common in those days.

“Most unhappy ; and yet most happy,” Bessie replied.

It is hardly necessary to say that they slept in the same room ; it had an ante-chamber that was occupied by Mistress Throckmorton's maids, who had, on this night, obtained leave to visit their friend, the housekeeper of Sir Walter Raleigh's other mansion, a pretty country place at Islington recently supplemented by the Queen's gift of Sherborne Castle, a magnificent estate in Dorsetshire.

“Whatever you wish, ‘I am your servant to command,’ as the young guardsman seems to be continually saying to everybody ; that is, if you do not weep and make my heart ache, I know not why. . . . What is the matter ? . . . Nay tell me.”

“I may not, my love ; shalt know one day. Alas, alas ! ”

“Alas, alas ! ” repeated Lucy, leaning over her friend, and kissing her. “Has Sir Walter been unkind ? ”

"Nay ; too kind, too kind," she answered, with a sigh. "When love increases, prudence decreases. Oh, beware, Lucy ; beware !"

"I am your co-adjutor, sweet cousin ; and was even so when you did tell me your pretty tale of love by letters writ to Littleham ; none shall ever love you better ; and yet, you keep something back from me, and weep ?"

"You are indeed a very child," Bessie answered. "Shalt know more ere long. . . . There are secrets will out of their own impulse. . . . If I go from Court for a while, will you go with me ?"

"Whither ?"

"Perchance to Islington, perchance back again to our dear native Devon."

"I would be loth to leave Whitehall, but love and duty would make me still your companion ; aye, to the end of the world."

"My own dear coz !" said Bessie. And they fell to shedding a few tears, and embracing each other with many kisses. . . .

"But enough of my lover," said Bessie, after a while ; "let us talk of David Yarcombe. When I bantered you about my Lord Essex, I thought you would have named your own true love and put me off that lordly quarry."

"It seems years instead of months that I said farewell to Littleham and I have seen so many strange new faces since David claimed me from my angry mother and timid father, that——"

"You are forgetting what manner of youth he be ?" said Bessie, recovering something of her former spirits. "Lucy, Lucy !"

"Well, dear heart, at Littleham, and Exmouth, and Topsham, and such-like outlandish and God-forsaken places, a poor girl rarely saw anything in the shape of a real gallant, feathers, broidered belt or baldrick, brocaded

vest, bows of ribbons and bows of mannerly politeness, and all the rest; and——”

“Why, surely, you saw Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter, and Master Grenville, and other gallant gentlemen, when you went to Plymouth?”

“I was but a child then, as you would have me now, and I recollect next to nothing about it. As for Sir Francis, he was a plain, honest gentleman, so far as I remember, and—well, of course I remember Sir Walter, a picture of all that is lovely . . . and yesterday, as it were, there was that treason-rogue, Master Kennock, he wore dandified things and swaggered about, and had jewels on his vest and pearl trimmings to his cloak, and I know not what; but he was mean, and lacked manners, and——”

“Hast so soon forgotten in defence of whose pure sweet honour David Yarcombe risked his life? Sir Walter has not forgotten the service he at the same time rendered the State, in Kennock or Brentanio or Clutterbuck’s taking-off—for Clutterbuck was his real name, nephew to Master Blatchford, the Justice—and the Queen herself will surely reward it, if ever she hath opportunity so to do.”

“Well, Her Majesty can soon make opportunity, if she be so disposed; can she not?”

“Sir Walter tells me that Master Sidmouth Trevelion was to seek you, and give you news of David Yarcombe; have you not seen him?”

“Here? At Court? In London?”

“Here,” answered Bessie, “here, in London. . . . I did you a wrong when I judged you thoughtless to-day, being so light of heart and so willing to be amused by those gadflies of the Court.”

“What is the matter?” asked Lucy. “Once more I ask; how many times will you pique my curiosity, and deny me? . . . Surely, you do not call Lord Essex a gadfly!”

"Lord Essex is pretty enough for a far better comparison, but David Yarcombe, from all I hear, is worth a thousand such, and not less handsome either."

"Oh! David is well enough," said Lucy, with a toss of her head.

"Well enough!" exclaimed Bessie, sitting up, and looking into her companion's face. "Dear heart, do you know that he is not well at all? that, indeed, he is very sick?"

"Where? How?" asked Lucy quickly.

"In London, 'tis believed. Master Sidmouth Trevelion undertook to find you, and make you acquainted with what hath passed since their arrival."

"Then he is in London?" Lucy asked, an anxious tone in her voice that was music to the other.

"And hath been, for nigh upon a week."

"Well?" said Lucy. "Go on, sweet mistress, go on."

"I said it was not well, dear child."

"What has happened to him?" asked the girl, dropping quietly into a chair at the foot of the bed. "Did you cry because he is hurt?"

"No, dearest; I cried because I am hurt. . . . He left Master Sidmouth Trevelion's ship to present himself before Sir Walter at Durham House, his only object to seek you out. . . . And never since hath he been seen."

"Well?" said Lucy, with trembling lips.

"He hath been traced to Paul's Walk, where he was entrapped by villains; thence to a tavern, their thievish rendezvous. . . . And that is all; unless there is later news, as well there may be, since Master Trevelion went forth with full authority and an escort to search the town afresh."

"My poor boy! my ill-starred David!" said Lucy; and then sat silent for a long time, only to break out again into simple ejaculations. "The poor lad! the rash, and thoughtless, dear, unhappy boy! . . . Where is Paul's

Walk? . . . Was it not enough that he should risk his life for me at Exmouth, but must be entrapped in London? . . . How entrapped? . . . Is Paul's Walk near Durham House? . . . I ask you, where is this Paul's Walk?"

"Not far away from Durham House," said Bessie, refraining from any explanation of the character of that lively promenade. "Knowest not Paul's Church?"

"Was he i' the church, when they conspired against him?"

"There is a walk through the church, a public way——"

"How entrapped?"

"By villains, who live by plundering the unwary."

"How long is't since David arrived in London? How came he? Shipped he with Master Trevelion?"

"Ten days ago on board the *Saint Paul*."

"A gallant ship, a brave master, a kindly, bold gentleman. . . . Dost think aught serious hath happened him? . . . Can Master Blatchford have avenged the death of his wicked nephew? . . . Methinks Master Blatchford had not much to regret in his taking-off. . . . But he is a Papist; and touch them there, they are pitiless, they never forgive. . . . My poor devoted, rash David! . . . Let us pray for him. . . . It would break my heart, if——"

And they both prayed that David might be restored to his friends and to Lucy, and ever have God's protection.

The next day, though he came not, nor news of him, Lucy, if a trifle paler than was her wont, seemed to have lost none of her high spirits; though Sir Christopher Hatton, to one who had praised her, exclaimed upon her, for "a pert if country-bred minx," and wondered "how the Queen could give her so much countenance," the more so that "my Lord Essex is known to affect the young person"; but the Queen, replied the other, admired red-

gold hair when 'twas not so rich as her own, and delighted to excite her courtiers with visions of fair women that should aid the illusion of a Court of virgin beauty. . . . Certain favoured men, who were most close and snug in the sunshine of Elizabeth's smiles, nevertheless, by innuendo spoke treason against Her Majesty's honour, since they affected to enjoy more than a platonic intimacy, rather to emphasise their authority and influence than to boast of their conquest. Thus were keen and active jealousies aroused. . . . Rivals intrigued against each other, for first place in Her Majesty's affections. . . . To be her minister, charged with great missions and endowed with financial, as well as official privileges, it was necessary to become her lover. . . .

And it must be said for her that she chose her lovers, not alone for their handsome figures and courtly graces, but for their mental and physical capacities as statesmen, soldiers, and men of administrative skill ; a strange, great woman, the morals of a vestal virgin on her lips, with the manners of a courtesan, whipping up her gown, and tying her garter in the presence of the ambassador of a royal suitor, and even condescending to discuss with the Spanish representative certain scandalous reports regarding her intimacy with Dudley, by showing him the situation of her sleeping apartment and that of the favourite. . . .

But this was over twenty years before Raleigh was at the zenith of his power, and Lucy Withycombe had the honour of being introduced to Her Majesty by her favourite maid of honour Mistress Throckmorton, though at sixty Elizabeth demanded as much homage and received compliments as florid, and asseverations of love as passionate from Dudley's successors as in her girlish days she had received from Seymour. . . . As for Raleigh, he was the least jealous of all the men who strove for Elizabeth's favour that they might attain to political power and national

distinction. He was generous to his enemies at home as he was uncompromising to the Queen's enemies abroad; though when most sincere in this respect he was most maligned, and, despite his vast sacrifices against Spain, was accused of playing into the hands of Philip. A man of such undoubted genius, impatient only of foes and traitors, with fortune and Elizabeth loading him with material favours, of lands, privileges of taxation, gifts, honours, it was to be looked for that he should have many enemies; and he was not the man to conciliate them. . . .

The Queen, quick to note a man's high capacity apart from appearance, and delighting to discover both in one person, showed her natural wit in her elevation of Raleigh. He was a man of wonderful versatility, and with an unjealous appreciation of all that was worthy and noble in another; a patron of learning, and a patriot whose far-seeing enterprise has blest us in the days of Victoria with realities that were no more than dreams in the days of Elizabeth. . . . There was only that one blot upon his career which History wots of, and condones with a sigh; though it was well atoned for, and—when Bessie Throckmorton came to Court she had no lover's tie, such as that which she had thought sufficient protection for her cousin, and without which she had never invited Lucy to her side, though she desired her companionship for reasons that need not be dwelt upon.

But Lucy's apparent light-heartedness under the circumstances of David Yarcombe's strange disappearance now disturbed Mistress Throckmorton as much as her companion's flirtations. Innocent as they were, their disastrous possibilities troubled Bessie now more than ever. . . . Bessie did not, however, quite understand her cousin. To a naturally robust constitution, there was added in the girl's nature a strong love of admiration, a desire to please, and with it a perfect knowledge of her own beauty. She knew that men admired her, she knew they could not do

otherwise; and she was willing to have them all at her feet, keeping in her heart a place only for David Yarcombe, whose love and admiration she most desired. . . . One can imagine a beautiful woman winning lovers, only to sacrifice them at the shrine of that favoured he who is her god. Such, without doubt, was the beautiful Lucy Withycombe; but what a perilous amusement for the woman, what a difficult problem for the elected lover!

CHAPTER IV

ADVENTURER, STATESMAN, DREAMER, LOVER

"**W**HAT success?" was Raleigh's greeting, when Trevelion was ushered into his room the next day.

"Enough to hang a thread of hope on, but not to run through the maze. Evidence is now complete that the lad was lured to yonder vile tavern in the shadow of Paul's Church, there probably drugged, robbed assuredly and half-stripped, for we have one of the villains tricked out in his doublet and girt with his sword. . . . He will admit nothing. . . . It is proposed to pinch him; but none of that kind of pressure for me. I have forbidden it. . . . I'd liefer take a man's life than torture him."

"Thou'rt in the right. We permit Italy, Spain, and even France, to set the fashion of our doublets and hose, but God send, we shall ever draw the line at the investigating methods of the Inquisition."

"Amen to that, Sir Walter! . . . But, as I was about to say, David Yarcombe must have profited by his lesson with the villain Kennock, 'tis evident, for one of the rogues bit the dust; 'tis thought David, robbed of his doublet and sword, did get away with the dead thief's garment. . . . But how far he may have gotten, 'tis not disclosed. . . . He may be dead; he may only be held prisoner. . . . From the moment he came aboard my ship, a certain instinct prompted me to count upon a great future for him. . .

But fate is fickle, and God's ways mysterious. . . . I fear me I must sail without him. . . . By your friendly permission, I have doubled the searching parties."

"B' heaven, we'll find him, Trevelion, dead or alive! You shall not sail without him, if God's will be not otherwise fixed."

Raleigh had the tact of the diplomatist, as well as the complaisance of true camaraderie. He fell in with the humours and idiosyncrasies of his friends. Trevelion ever put the Almighty in front of his work. Raleigh was a man of broader instincts; yet he feared God, and in his direst perils humbled himself before Him.

"I had said to myself, if there be another Goliath to be slain, this lad is the second David," said Trevelion. "But let us to those affairs of State and policy and adventure you do me the honour to invite my counsel upon."

"Sit ye down, then, at your ease," said Raleigh, motioning his friend to a chair, "and give me your best attention. Wouldst care to smoke while I discourse of Guiana and the city of Manoa? 'Tis a heaven-sent weed; hath in it a rare essence, to satisfy the stomach and feed the imagination likewise. . . . Nay; art not yet a convert to the contemplative recreation of the gods? Well, heaven send thee compensation! . . . The papers you forwarded to me are valuable, inasmuch as they confirm me in a purpose I did hint something of when last we met."

Trevelion nodded, and tucked his sword between his legs and leaned his elbow on the great arm of his chair.

"Duplicates of dispatches from one Antonio de Berreo to Philip of Spain, with further notes and details of the city of Manoa. I hope they were not your only booty."

"It was a prize that satisfied my crew," Trevelion answered.

"A cockle-boat to a Plate fleet, compared with prizes yet in store for all of us," said Raleigh. "An empire to

be snatched from the clutch of Spain. . . . Much as we hate her, I cannot forbear to commend the patient virtues of these Spanish foes of ours. No nation hath, surely, ever endured so many adventures and miseries as they in their Indian discoveries. Tempests, shipwrecks, famine, overthrows, mutinies, heat, and cold. . . . But at last they have discovered a land which has for its capital the treasure-house of the world. 'Tis for us to enter the golden portals before them.

"Captain George Popham captured for me, on a Spanish ship, as thou hast done, certain letters addressed to Philip of Spain, making it known that in his name, on the 23rd of April, 1593, at a place called Warisimero, on the Orinoco, they had annexed Guiana to the dominions of His Catholic Majesty, under the name of El Nuevo Dorado. . . . In these letters 'tis set forth, with a minuteness of detail that doth carry conviction in every line, Guiana hath abundance of gold, and greater and richer cities than e'en Peru could boast when first Spain planted her sacrilegious flag upon her golden shores. The chiefs on festal days anoint their bodies and roll themselves in gold-dust, have golden eagles dangling from their breasts and great pearls in their ears. If only half be true that is recorded of cities already explored, the capital of this new world of untold wealth taxes the imagination to conceive of its boundless treasure. Such is the richness of the gold mines in other parts that the natives would willingly trade ingots for Jews' harps! . . . Nay, be patient. I am with thee in making due discount for sanguine explorers' and travellers' tales; though you and I, dear friend, know too well that nature, earnestly explored and truthfully described, needs not the pen of fancy."

"I heard strange stories at Trinidad," said Trevelion. "But seemed to me the devil might have a hand in them, to lure unwary mariners as the sirens tempted Ulysses."

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"But we are not to be tempted by naked nymphs, nor mermaids' harps," said Raleigh. "We are after more material rewards. . . . Yet they talk of an Amazon city, with maidens fair as Venus and limbed like unto Diana, that have built themselves ramparts of oak, and cedar, and ironwood, against encroachment of vile man. . . . And one telleth of peoples with eyes in their breasts; but these things are no more to be believed than the classic tales thou speakest of."

"Nay, but by Our Lord, I do not doubt them; nor the sailors turned to swine, nor the Gorgons. 'Tis a very fleabite to the opening of the seals, in the Revelations; but what fears me is that it may be all a plot of the devil."

"'Plot of the devil!'" said Raleigh, a little impatiently. "Have we not had sufficient exemplar of the riches of Spain, by token of our own varied captures? Is it not her store of gold and silver, her wealth of spices, ebony, ivory, crystal, musk, rubies, pearls, that give her domination of the universe? He who hath money rules. 'Tis the same with nations; once we capture her treasure houses, then we cut her claws, and clip her wings. . . . Doubter, listen to this," he went on, now turning over the leaves of Lopez's "History of the Indies." "Here is sober history, an approved narrative of facts; it hath reference to the court of Guancapa, ancestor of the Emperor of Guiana. 'All the vessels of his house, table, and kitchen were of gold and silver, and the meanest of silver and copper for strength and hardness of metal. He had, in his wardrobe, statues of gold, which seemed giants; and figures, in proportion and bigness, of all the beasts, birds, trees, and herbs which the earth bringeth forth; and of all the fishes that the sea and waters of his kingdom breedeth.' He had also ropes, budgets, chests, and troughs of gold and silver, heaps of billets of gold that seemed wood marked out to burn. Yea, and they say the Incas had

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a garden of pleasure, in an island near Puna, where they went to recreate themselves when they would take the air of the sea, which had all kinds of garden-herbs, flowers, and trees of gold and silver—an invention and magnificence till then never seen."

"'Twere of a surety to make the precious metal hateful in English eyes, to exchange the white rose of Devonshire for a silver replica, or a marigold for one of metal ever so rich; a garden of artificial blooms, for the daisies, the columbines, the lilies, the scented gilliflowers of a Devon valley. A devil's garden, Sir Walter, a devil's garden!" exclaimed Trevelion.

"And you shall help to pack it up as booty for your men and the glorification of the Queen, and to mint into angels and doubloons, and such-like, to build churches withal."

"With a sprinkling of Anabaptists' conventicles for God's sake, as the ribald call them; and——"

"Nay; pardon, Trevelion. I honour thy faith, and am tolerant of every doctrine, except that Popish and profane business of the Wafer, the Immaculate Conception, and the claim of temporal power."

"That is three doctrines," said Trevelion; "but let us not mix theology with fable."

"Beshrew me, but I fear the one goes with the other. . . . Nay; I will not controvert the matter. . . . Fix your attention upon Guiana; for you have brought me not the least of encouraging letters, to push my zeal in a direction I have planned out to travel. . . . The dispatches it has been your good fortune to place in my hands are duplicates of papers already, no doubt, in possession of King Philip. They are the latest reports from Antonio de Berreo, Governor of Trinidad, who did annex Guiana in the King's name, containing verification of earlier descriptions of the country, and referring to my good servant, Captain Jacob Whiddon, whom I sent out with instructions to bring me such inde-

pendent intelligence of Guiana as he might glean in the adjacent seas. Whiddon had already informed me of his investigations. He was fobbed off by de Berreo with reports and rumours and indefinite matters, but could not disguise from Whiddon his anxiety, lest Spain should be anticipated in further explorations of the El Dorado. . . . In these letters from de Berreo, he tells the King that one Whiddon, an Englishman, a more simple-minded man than his countrymen generally, hath, nevertheless, penetrated the secret of Manoa, 'so far, indeed, as we have penetrated it,' and that only hitherto by tradition and indirect report. Conversing with this man, de Berreo went on to say that Whiddon, while he smiled, as at a fairy tale, touching what he had heard relating to Manoa, confessed that 'twas evident these seas were rich in treasures, and that Guiana might be all that was accounted thereof; but at the same time de Berreo flattered his own careful policy with the knowledge that certain gold mines already discovered and partly worked in Guiana for Spanish adventurers, were still utterly terra incognita to the Englishman, or any other. . . . And this goes well with Whiddon's record, which you shall read at your leisure; and, be sure, shall not go unrewarded thereby."

"My chiefest reward, as thou knowest, shall be in spoiling the Spaniards. But what wouldst thou, Sir Walter?"

"'Tis my intention to explore and conquer Guiana for England," said Raleigh, rising to his feet, and striding across the room as if he were already upon the deck of his triumphant ship. "At my own expense, with some assistance from the Lord High Admiral and Sir Robert Cecil, I propose to fit out a squadron for Guiana: and I would desire you to join me with the *Saint Paul*. . . . Nay, listen; it need not interfere with your present voyage; we will rendezvous at Trinidad."

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Without more ado, terms and conditions were discussed; and Trevelion was about to take his departure, when Raleigh delayed him with a request "more personal than the one you have so manfully complied withal. . . . I would now desire of you a favour, for the love you bear me. . . . Before sunset—let me speak it low in thine ear—I am to be married."

"Is't so, in very truth?"

"In very truth," said Sir Walter. "I'd fain keep thy respect and esteem, dear friend; but still more do justice to the bravest and best of women. Speak low. 'Tis most strange, this power of love, dear friend, that it should come between a man and his mightiest ambitions, wreck reputations, ruin states, and make cowards of the bravest. I have never felt so meanly of myself since I did open out against thee, and I have writ a letter I would give my estates to recall. . . . I rely upon your friendship in this, 'dear old Sid,' as they call thee in our beloved Devon, where to know Master Sidmouth Trevelion is to honour him."

"Command me, Walter," the fine old fellow answered; "what thou deemest right shall be accounted so by me. I am thy friend, till death—as ever I was, methinks."

"I thank thee," said Raleigh, seizing his hand. . . . "This marriage must, perforce, be secret. . . . Until such time as it may with safety be proclaimed. . . . Thou shalt be the witness thereof; none other. Seek me here at the hour of four, when thou shalt know further. . . . To-morrow shalt speak with Mistress Lucy Withycombe, at the palace of Whitehall—perchance, with the Queen herself."

"'Twere too much honour for a mere sailorman; though as a preacher of the Gospel, I humbly look for favour at a mightier throne than that of any earthly power."

"The Queen shall respect you none the less that your faith is in your sword, and both tend to her glory."

"But an Anabaptist!" said Trevelion, with a proud smile—something of the pride that apes humility. "She hates the Anabaptists."

"You need not wrangle with her about the articles of your faith, good friend," said Walter, smiling. "Tell her of the Indies and the Southern seas, the capture of a ship of war; but not too much about its value, little or nothing of thy bags of gold-dust, or thy pearls or woven carpets, or what not, lest she should cry out for her share thereof."

"I will be wary, my brave lad of Devon. Then farewell, until four of the clock! and may the hour be blessed unto thee!"

CHAPTER V

RETROSPECT; AND THE CLOCK STRIKES FOUR

"THE same faithful heart as ever," said Raleigh, taking up his pipe and seating himself in a cushioned corner of the room, a living picture framed in books; for the shelves of that favourite nook came down on each side of the seat, so that they were within easy reach of the master's hand.

He had dreamt dreams at Hayes Barton, and realised some of them in France and Flanders. He had dreamt dreams here, on the Thames, and they had come true. He had dreamt dreams in company with the silent sages about him, and would carry on the lamp of knowledge that burnt bright in their pages of travel and philosophic research; histories of strange and romantic voyages, records of the envied progress of Spain, hints of the marvels of land and sea yet to be discovered by the shepherd of the Ocean for the Mistress of the Seas. As the smoke ascended about the literary treasures in their brave tooled and gilded bindings, their golden clasps and embossed titles, the Queen's favourite watched the diaphanous clouds, and reflected fitfully on the past, the present, and the future. There is a subtle influence in tobacco that induces meditation, and often rewards it with pictures, as clear to the mind's eye as if they were indeed painted tableaux. . . . And what a brilliant past had Raleigh to look back upon! If he could

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only have penetrated the future, now that he had reached the very summit of that wonderful high mountain he had seen in his dreams; so vast, so full of glaciers and precipices, so fearsome to climb, but so easy at last, when the royal siren put out her hand and whispered, "Come!" . . . Let us glance for a moment at the daring pilgrim's ascent of the dangerous heights. . . .

A boy at Hayes, with but little family influence; a student at Oxford, undistinguished for his learning; a volunteer in the Huguenot camp of Moncontour; afterwards retreating, under the skilful generalship of Nassau; at twenty-three, back again in England, with the experience of a man twice his age. . . . Thence he carries his sword into the Netherlands, against the Spaniards, whom he hates with patriotic bitterness. After the battle of Rimenant, he is once more in London, studying for the Bar. Then with his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, in an abortive expedition, searching for the North-West Passage. Now he is in Ireland, fighting against the subsidised forces of Italy and Spain. For brief periods he is Governor of Munster and Cork. His brilliant and romantic attack on Castle-in-Harsh is only one of many instances of his subtle strategy and splendid daring. . . . Back again in London, he is disputing with Grey and other noblemen before the Privy Council; holding his own all along the line.

The Queen is deeply impressed with his gallantry, his daring, his air of authority; and he is further commended to her by an act of picturesque courtesy, that is as familiar a bit of history as the defeat of the Armada. Her Majesty, taking the air, stopped at a flashy place, making some scruple whether to go on or no; Raleigh, dressed in the gay and costly habit of the times, casts off his new plush cloak and spreads it upon the ground, whereon the Queen treads gently over. He is soon so well established in the

Queen's favour that, upon a window, obvious to Her Majesty's eyes, he writes: "Fain would I climb, yet fear I to fall;" beneath which Her Majesty writes: "If thy heart fail thee, climb not at all." . . .

He makes his way rapidly in the Queen's esteem; is appointed Captain-Yeoman of the Guard, which adds to his growing list of enemies both Essex and Hatton. He is full of schemes of adventure and dreams of colonisation; sends pioneering expeditions across the seas; lays the foundation of Virginia; is elected a member of parliament, made a knight, granted all kinds of privileges; becomes rich, fits out costly expeditions for Virginia, is continually making arrangements to sail thither himself, but is prevented by the Queen, who will not permit him to risk his life, or for the truer reason that she will not be deprived of his fascinating society and the useful wisdom of his counsel in affairs of State; openly quarrels with Essex, or rather Essex with him: the Queen prevents their meeting on what the French call "the field of honour." A masterful, intellectual, handsome, active gentleman; his brain teeming with schemes to cripple the power of Spain and build, beyond the seas, a rival English Empire. . . .

At the right moment in his career, the oft-repeated cry of "Wolf!" comes true. The Spanish Armada appears in real earnest. A fleet of one hundred and forty enormous ships, crowded with fighting men and arms of the heaviest and deadliest then known, equipped for conquest the most complete, carrying instruments of torture to be used upon the base-born islanders; and with famous and princely commanders, among whom the country had been parcelled out as rewards for their success. This mighty fleet, stretching from one extremity of its line to the other, taking up seven miles of sea, sailing in a crescent formation, is sighted off the island kingdom; arranged as a net, prepared to close in upon everything

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between its two horns, a formation which, three hundred years later, the Zulus adopted on land in their advance upon the successors of the men of Elizabeth. . . .

But everybody knows the story; though every history does not record how much Raleigh did to influence the policy of the English defence and attack. He was dead against "grappling." "Fighting loose at large" was his plan. They were "malignant fools," he said, who advised any other. His policy was adopted. Fighting his own ship, he was in the van of the first rush of vessels that dashed in among the astonished galleons. Conspicuous for his intrepid and successful service; he was in the thick of the desperate fight off Gravelines, and foremost in hunting the enemy into the Northern Sea. . . .

The Armada defeated, heaven's artillery assisting in its destruction, Raleigh is once more busy with his Virginian Plantation. In spite of every disaster, his hope never wavers; his belief in the British Colony of Virginia is destined, however, only to be justified in future ages—the consummation of a great ambition, which he sees in his mind's eye, as he burns the golden weed, in whose smoke men have seen more wonders than have ever been revealed in the crystal globes of the most renowned magicians.

And now, if he has been looking back over his career, as we would fain wist, he is once more in Ireland, and enjoying the society of Spenser, the poet, whose muse is for ever indebted—and we, therefore—to the scenic beauties of the Green Isle and its ingenuous and light-hearted people; whose love it has been hard to win from remembrance of those stormy days, but whose songs go deep into English hearts, that have but one desire—to win their entire and unclouded friendship. . . .

At the height of Raleigh's power, one of the sweetest incidents in the lives of these two illustrious Englishmen is their coming together in social and friendly intimacy.

"The Shepherd of the Ocean" undertook to be Spenser's sponsor to "Cynthia" herself; and the Queen received him graciously. Almost immediately, the publication of "The Faery Queen" was commenced with an expository letter from "the most humbly affectionate author" to "the Right Noble and Valorous Walter Raleigh." . . . And now Mephistopheles may be said to come upon the scene, with his vision of beauty, Bessie Throckmorton, and his magic pictures of the golden city of Manoa.

This brief glance at the Raleigh story brings us back to where we paused. The clocks of Paul's and Whitehall and the timepieces of Durham House are beginning to strike the hour at which Sidmouth Trevelion was bidden to be the one witness of Walter Raleigh's marriage.

CHAPTER VI

MASTER SIDMOUTH TREVELION OFFERS UP A PRAYER

"WELCOME, comrade!" said Raleigh, as the ocean warrior entered the room on the last stroke of the hour. "Hast donned wedding garments? 'Tis noble in thee!"

Trevelion had simply exchanged his russet doublet and hose for a more state-like texture, and the feather in his hat was fastened by a diamond buckle.

"A bit of vanity in honour of the occasion, friend Walter, and in further expectation of a visit to the palace of Whitehall. The master of a ship, moreover, must at times have regard to his attire. 'Tis well to cheer your men with the bravery of an extra feather, and be on terms with one's vile body when called to receive the sword of some Spanish don, who has not carried sufficient sail to show his English foe a clean pair of heels, or guns enough to sweep his enemy from the seas. . . . Shouldst not set my tongue wagging about feathers and such-like trifles, when there is so much of moment afoot."

"Come, then," said Raleigh.

Laying aside his pipe, and taking up his sword and belt that had lain upon a chair by the table, he conducted his friend through a panel-doorway, up steep and winding stairways, and along tortuous passages. . . . At length he paused before a wide door, encrusted with studded nails, and crossed with iron hinges. He took a key from his

pocket, and unlocked the ponderous bolt. . . . Passing beneath a narrow porchway, they entered a severely decorated chapel. Once, both architecturally and by adornment of gorgeous paintings, golden chalices, and holy relics, it had been an ecclesiastical gem; still beautiful, though no longer ornate, it was a fit chamber for the worship of God, sanctified by priestly blessing, reformed and unreformed.

"Canst pray in any sacred edifice other than a conventicle, Trevelion?" inquired Raleigh, in something of a cynical tone, Trevelion thought.

"The faithful heart needs no accessory of wood or stone, or pew, or steeple," Trevelion replied. "God needs no glimmer of gewgaws, nor tinkling of bells, nor music of psalter and sackbut, nor virginals to beget His attention. I prayed to Him once even in a Castilian torture-chamber, and He heard me."

"Forgive me, dear comrade; I feared me the taint of Papistry that still hangs over the altar of this Reformed chapel might damp thy ardour and chill thy faith."

"Nay; a man's life is his best prayer," Trevelion replied.

"And the efficacy of prayer is the prayer a man answers for himself," said Raleigh.

Sir Walter believed in prayer as many a great man before and since hath believed, more as a pledge unto himself than an appeal to the Throne of Grace; a vow, a high aspiration, a covenant, God being willing, to be worthy, so far as poor human nature may be worthy, of God's gracious favour.

"You mean that he shall be worthy of his prayer; then let's to it, friend," said Trevelion. And falling upon his knees, he began forthwith to pray aloud; and with such masterful force of language and in a vocabulary so mixed with the inspired phraseology of the Scriptures, that it was as if he commanded what he desired. He

Master Trevelton Offers up a Prayer II.

flung at the Creator and His only begotten Son a voluble repetition of Bible and New Testament promises to the faithful soul, and asked, boldly and fearlessly, for God's blessing upon the union about to be established between Walter Raleigh and Bessie Throckmorton, quoting Christ's disciples on marriage, and naming some of the services His servant, Walter Raleigh, had rendered to His kingdom on earth and the further services it was his intention to render, and asking for strength to his arm and fervour to his heart; and that Bessie Throckmorton might be a solace and a blessing to him, and that they might live to see their children knightly servants of their God and their Sovereign. . . . He said a word or two for David Yarcombe; concluding with his own heartfelt gratitude for God's blessings so abundantly showered upon himself, and for the continued health and happy sovereignty of His servant, Queen Elizabeth. . . . And so full of ardour were his appeals, that the seeming naïveté of them and their worldliness of expectation were sanctified by the honest passion of the appellant's faith. His final outburst was an assurance to God that, even though He should not deign on the moment to have regard to His servant, yet would he not despair, nor would he murmur. "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation."

"Amen!" said Raleigh; and "Amen!" was repeated by two other voices in the little chapel, for Master the Reverend John Arundel and Mistress Throckmorton had entered the place, unheard and unseen of the two men on their knees, Raleigh before the altar, Trevelton on the bare stones in the centre of the aisle.

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"Bessie, my darling, let me present to you my dear friend, Sidmouth Trevelion, preacher, mariner, soldier, and true Devonian."

"My dear young mistress," said Trevelion, kissing her hand with the formal grace of a courtier, "I knew your honoured and martyred father. His soul is with the blest. I am well convinced that this union we are about to celebrate in God's name and in holy fashion of your reformed Church would have his approval, if he were on the earth. If the spirits of those who are gone before are privileged to minister to us here below, he is with us now."

"Pray God your words be sure and fitting the occasion, sir," Bessie answered. "I would have postponed the joy of it until it might have been ventured upon with security; for, should it become known at Court—and secrets most profound find echoes there—the Queen cannot fail of a great displeasure, and she hath been lavish of her favours——"

"Where they have never been so well deserved, my dear young mistress," said Trevelion. "Speak I not the truth, reverend sir?"

"Of a surety," said the benevolent-looking clerk.

"I fear me I had still permitted policy to prevail over love, had not my friend, Master Trevelion, convinced me that a man should keep his honour bright as the jewel of woman's faith."

Trevelion, about to interpose, was gently put aside by Raleigh, who remarked, to Bessie and the clergyman: "You have heard him pray, you should hear him preach; nay, an he be not quite orthodox in the matter of forms and ceremonies, be sure he is of a robust faith, an enemy to Rome and Spain, one who in his own ship did hunt the last of the galleons to the North, and is now arming to spoil him where hitherto he hath been invulnerable, ashore."

"Nay, friend; a truce to thy commendations; bestow them on thy fair bride. I permit myself, being an old man,

Master Trevelion Offers up a Prayer 115

to say she doth glorify the western home of beautiful women."

"You make me blush, sir. I would I had Mistress Withycombe here to keep me in countenance; for she indeed is more than comely, and takes pleasure in a rightful tribute of admiration."

"Alas, poor David!" said Trevelion.

"Alas, and alas!" Bessie rejoined. "It were well he come quickly, if he would find at Court the girl he left in Devon."

"But, my good sweet Bess, and you, dear friends, we are too careless of time. Came we not here to be married?"

"Stand you on my right hand," said the clergyman; "you, sweet mistress, on my left." And they having silently obeyed, Trevelion as representing the congregation, the clergyman, in voice that seemed more in consonance with the ancient building in which they were assembled than the more powerful organ of the Anabaptist, began the marriage service. "Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this congregation, to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony; which is an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency." . . . And so on, closely following the form of the service as it is observed by the Church to this day; and concluding with two of the most eloquent and human petitions in the authorised Book of Common Prayer. . . . And man and wife rose from their knees with a deep and holy love in their hearts, and prepared now to meet any fate; yet both conscious that they might soon need the intervention of that Higher Power which Trevelion constantly proclaimed beyond the might of all earthly monarchs.

"But we must e'en have you pledge us in a loving-cup," said Raleigh. "Nay, dear wife, lean upon our friend Trevelion, whiles I and Master Arundel lead you the way."

They did not return to Sir Walter's study, but to what he called the gate-house parlour, a panelled room of oak, with an inglenook, and sofas upholstered in leather and gold brocade, cabinets carved in Holland, the casements glazed with bottle-window-panes that flashed in the setting sun. On the table was spread a dainty feast of fruits and confections, and there were crystal beakers of wine, and goblets of gold and silver, and a three-handled loving-cup, in which they pledged the bride and vowed themselves to her service. The bride, laying aside for the nonce her cloak and hood, was seen to be arrayed, not in gown and stomacher of pure white as might have become a maiden bride, but in a rich robe of sober grey brocade, decorated with shimmering designs in pearls and silver, the bodice embroidered with turquoises set in gold, and cut low, displaying a round full bust; a vision of young matronly loveliness, a dimpled face as "healthful fair" as when first it caught the eye and enchained the fancy of the handsomest and most gallant man at Court; but with now a trace of anxiety, fighting 'twixt pink and white, which should hold sway in cheeks that glowed and paled under the influence of deep emotions.

From the low, latticed window they could see the river; and while Sir Walter's eyes looked watchfully thitherwards, a barge was rowed to the water-gate, the men in Sir Walter's well-known livery.

"Now, my dear Bess," he said, "I commit you to the care of Master Trevelion. There is a coach in the courtyard will convey you under escort back to your duties at Whitehall. My heart is with you as it hath ever been since the first day we met. I take my head to that other Bess, our Queen, with such service of counsel and strategy as she may require of it."

"Dear heart, be wary," said Bessie. "I pray heaven this day I may not have brought you within touch of peril."

Master Trevelion Offers up a Prayer 117

"Would to God I had the courage to take you to the foot of the throne and say: 'May it please your Majesty, this is my wife!'"

"And why not, in heaven's name?" burst out Trevelion. "Where should be the peril? And if there lie danger in such a course, why, surely 'twere best to face it and——"

"Nay, nay, dear friend," said Bessie, her hand upon Trevelion's arm, "you know not what you say; the thing we have done is treason in the sight of Her Majesty."

"Then what calleth Her Majesty virtue?" Trevelion asked.

"To love none other than herself," said Master Arundel, "and in her honour to live celibate."

"Dear friends, pursue this matter no further, for my sake, for the sake of your great ambitions for our dear England; trust me I am right in this desire."

"Let be as my wife doth will it," said Raleigh, with special emphasis on the word wife as he took her face between his strong hands and kissed her on both cheeks.

"Thou'rt a brave, good soul," said Trevelion. "There be uncrowned queens and they that wear the diadem; and trust me, my Lady Raleigh, thou hast no truer subject than Sidmouth Trevelion."

"Nor more devoted friend than your servant John Arundel," said the clergyman, and with that Bessie Raleigh found it a hard matter to keep back her tears.

"Dear friends, I thank you with all my heart," said Raleigh. "Come what may, the Church, dear Bess, hath blessed our union, the stars are propitious, and steel is not stronger than the bonds of love and friendship that bind Trevelion to both you and me. In that triple love be sure we both may count on Master Arundel."

"That may you so indeed, Sir Walter. And God prosper all of us as we shall best deserve His fatherly care!"

"Amen!" said Trevelion.

"Farewell, till we meet again, and that right soon," said Sir Walter. "We travel to the same place by different ways, and if our secret leak out before 'tis our desire that it should be known, then we shall hope to accept the inevitable, trusting in God!"

The golden beams of a summer sunset burnished the gilded coach that lumbered along the Strand to Whitehall; not the Strand of to-day, or anything like it; a rough highway, with a few timbered houses and shops on one side, field and forest in the distance, and on the banks of the river palaces and gardens; at Charing Cross, now the central pulse of a mighty Empire, a village—the village of Charing—with the scent of burnt wood in the air, the breath of cows, the varying sounds of rural life; and a little farther, on the left, going to and fro, gay equipages for Whitehall and Westminster, soldiers in shining cuirasses carrying cumbersome arquebuses, footmen with helmets and pikes, royal carriages drawn by white steeds with outriders and trumpeters in tabards and bedizened jerkins troopers in coats of mail. . . .

The river was the other highway to Whitehall on the one hand and to Paul's on the other; farther still, to Hampton Court on the one hand, and farther still, to Greenwich and the sea on the other. . . . Silent highway and common road alike were bathed in sunshine, and alike decked with picturesque signs of wealth. In the air, was the perfume of the farm with now and then a whiff of scent from the spice islands, something that might have been a quivering of the romance that was in evidence all about; romance of love and adventure, romance of soldiering and sailing, romance of Court jealousies and intrigues of proud lords and ladies; and over all, a Queen who might have belonged to some strange and fascinating fairy tale, so fickle, fond and fanciful Her

Master Trevelton Offers up a Prayer 119

Majesty, with love of fine gowns and gay pageantry; the pleasures of her Court made the fiercer by the gaunt figure of tragedy, that now and then appeared among the dancers, the grim trophies on London Bridge, between Whitehall and the Tower, marking the perils that lurked in the flowery paths of dalliance and the thorny ways of ambition.

CHAPTER VII

AN INTERLUDE

THE crushing defeat of the Armada, though it placed England in a position of security and independence, neither contented the ambition of the victors nor dispelled the illusion of the Spanish King. It stimulated both to further endeavour. Englishmen, now more than ever confident in their superior seamanship and valour, were bent on a further crippling of Spain before she could sufficiently recover from her great disaster and resume the offensive; while almost every English merchantman that sailed the seas sought to combine trading with the capture of Spanish ships. Whaling captains even made agreements with their owners that the capture of Spanish ships or the plunder of Spanish towns should be their first endeavour and whaling a last resource. "Let your first news be the taking of your first prize," was the parting injunction of a whaling owner to his captain; "I'd liefer you loaded with gold and spices and pearls, and silver plate and rare wines, than bring me the best cargo of oil ever shipped; moreover, we owe it to Her gracious Majesty to hit the Spaniard whenever he shows his nose." So the whalers and the merchant ships made whaling and trading a secondary business, and Queen Elizabeth and her island subjects spread their nets in every sea and assailed the Spanish flag wherever they could attack it ashore.

Between these acts of piracy and war, the pioneers of

new worlds struck inland, planted the first colonies, and laid in the foundations of the British Empire. Spain denounced them all for bandits and marauders; but, when war's afoot, the bandit, carrying his nation's flag, becomes a patriotic warrior. Moreover, even when we were at peace with Spain she laid hands upon our people in her ports, persecuted them on account of their religion, and burnt many as heretics. It was hard to know when it was peace or war with such a nation until after our Scottish King James had murdered Sir Walter Raleigh, his best and bravest subject, to win the favour of the Spanish tyrant from whose clutches the martyr had never spared himself to save his Queen and country.

It was not for gain alone that the English ships and adventurers carried their lives in their hands and tackled the enemy whatever the odds against them. They had mighty wrongs to avenge; comrades languishing in Spanish dungeons, and other victims burnt at the stake in Spanish market-places. Constituting themselves emissaries of vengeance, they were also the advance-guard of a new empire. Raleigh, who aided them with his purse and backed them with his influence, believed that the best way to cripple the universal enemy was to seize the sources of his treasure, found rival states, and make common cause with the dusky victims of his conquests.

The natural pride of the English seaman was engaged in all this, and it had an impulse in the fanatical spirit of the Reformation. The memory of St. Bartholomew had not died out, and the national resentment was further excited by the discovery on board the ships of the Armada of ghastly instruments, which were intended to tear the flesh and otherwise mutilate the bodies of the "English Lutheran dogs." So the impulses that filled the sails and strengthened the arms of the English adventurers were numerous as they were potential; and at the head of the

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nation was a Queen willing to give every possible encouragement to those of her subjects who might be ready, at their own charges, to undertake the humiliation of the enemy. At the same time she had a theory which, if England were pressed to-day by foreign foes, would be readily accepted; it was that the nation and she had one purse. If she shared the plunder, she did not hoard her gains; except in a sort of miserly accumulation of jewellery and fine clothes.

For a great Queen, she had as many vices as virtues. Happily, she never lacked great men at her councils; and it was easy for some of them to play the part of her lovers, thus pandering to a very pitiful ambition, by which, however, she may be said to have evidenced that superiority of man over woman so much denied in our day, but so hotly insisted upon throughout all Nature. . . . It is as if a satirical devil had been permitted to have a hand in the management of that brilliant stage of the English Court, so tricked out the actors with feathers and furbelows, with garments that mocked the peacock, and struttings that caricatured the turkey; and all because a great Queen must be pulled down to the level of ordinary humanity, by a cheap vainglory of feminine conquest. This was, however, better than the rival Court of Spain, that was so puffed up with pride that it spent its days in bowing and scraping, and inventing ceremonials of etiquette and a Holy Office, so-called, for the aggrandisement of the Church and the entertainment of fiends while her generals went about enslaving the unsophisticated peoples of newly discovered lands. Nor were the English free from the blot of slave-dealing, though in time they made amends. If ever a nation can make full atonement for such a crime, England has done it in many a sacrifice of men and money. Her once bitter enemy, continuing in her evil courses to this day, is now paying for the same at the hands of the

very country which her Columbus discovered and which only within recent years has won the right to unbar the chains of Cuba and the Philippines.

Spain, God knows, has many gracious qualities—what people has not?—but she can never have freedom for honest development so long as the pall of an enslaving superstition clouds her brain and checks the free and wholesome beat of her heart. Her ecclesiastical policy is a different thing from that of her English co-religionists. They say Catholicism is one and the same everywhere; it is assuredly not so. The Howards and other great Catholic families lavished their wealth and fought like heroes against the Catholic Armada; and the Catholics of the United States met in their thousands and supported the action of the American Government in their recent rescue of oppressed Cubans from the Catholic Government of Spain. Catholicism has its virtuous and beautiful side, and its high-minded and generous devotees; but it allows an awful margin for persecution and tyranny, and in power is invariably arrogant, tyrannical, and cruel.

CHAPTER VIII

DAVID'S PAPIST ANGEL

THESE things, this Court, these adventures, this picturesque period, in which the sun of Spain began to set and that of England to rise, represent little more than the background of the history of David Yarcombe; and one has to make an effort to realise this, when conspicuous individualities of the time might well call for more ample recognition. If we let them pass, shadow-like, across these pages, it is not for lack of appreciation of their greatness, but that we are dealing with adventures hitherto unrecorded, while familiar history teems with the lives and works of rival celebrities.

They are none the less martyrs who sacrifice themselves, whether the altar of their devotion be Lutheran or Catholic. There are hearts as pure and noble in one faith as the other. David Yarcombe learned the most beautiful lesson of his life in the home of those secret worshippers who sheltered and nursed him in his direst need, knowing well that he was at enmity with their faith and had denounced their Church as the Scarlet Lady; for in his delirium he said many things that proved him to be the bitter enemy of their religion, and, so far as the priest himself was concerned, the uncompromising foe of his country. The priest was a Spaniard.

Nevertheless these people had tended him and prayed over him as if he had been their dearest friend and

"brother in God." He had suffered from a fever, that without skilful attendance and careful nursing might have proved quite as deadly as the assassin's murderous knife.

"What a strange dream!" he said to himself one morning when he appeared to have been awakened by the singing of a linnet. Of course he was dreaming—a dream within a dream, he thought, in a vague, speculative way.

He was in a room that he had certainly never seen before, except in his dreams, and then only in a kind of hopeful imagery. It was plain enough now, at all events. He sat up and looked around him. He was in a strange bed; there was no mistake about that. The linnet was not singing in the copse behind Lucy Withycombe's home at Littleham; it was in a cage, at the window of a whitewashed room, the cleanliness of which was refreshing. The window was open, and between the half-drawn curtains, beyond the wooden cage, whose little occupant was making the welkin ring, he could see the sun shining on thatched and red-tiled roofs. Upon the wall, opposite the foot of his bed, a crucifix hung and a picture of Jerusalem. Beneath the window was a large oaken coffer, with carved front and lid. A small table stood by the bed. There was a bunch of roses, a small chased silver cup, and a medicine bottle upon it. Two high-backed chairs, with silken cushions, completed the furnishing of the room. . . .

"Yes, I must be dreaming," he said to himself. The illusion was not dispelled when the door opened and there entered an angel, nothing of lesser mould; a halo of raven hair, a gown soft as angelic wings, a footstep that made no sound. . . . And a voice that was music. . . . "You are better," it said; "your God is good to you, and ours, by divine intercession, has heard our prayers." . . . Yes, it was a dream. . . . The linnet seemed to say so; its song was not of this earth. . . . He closed his eyes. . . . "It is well," the voice said; "you must not

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fatigue yourself." . . . She laid her hand upon his forehead. . . . He looked at her. . . . "The fever has gone," she said. "Now you have only to get back your strength. . . ."

"Am I dreaming?" he asked, and his voice sounded to him like an echo, a dead voice, a whisper not his own.

"No, it is not a dream," she answered.

He looked at her again. . . . "Not a dream?" he said.

"Then I am in heaven!"

She smiled. It was no angel; yet she might have been one, so pure and good she looked; though, by the canons of beauty, she could have been accounted uncomely. Her mouth was too wide to be such as poets acclaim. Her cheeks were hollow; her eyes "made silence eloquent," but when she smiled her countenance was lovely. Expression is everything; and when it is the interpretation of a pure and cultivated mind, it is better than ideal features.

"How beautiful you are!" he said.

She blushed; for, despite all her efforts to regard him merely as her father's guest, and notwithstanding the grave suspicion that had been cast upon his character by the condition of his attire, the articles that had fallen from his pockets, and the legend of blood engraven upon his alien sword, she had confessed to herself that she loved him. . . . Strange inexplicable passion. . . . "To love," saith the sage, "is to make a compact with sorrow."

CHAPTER IX

"WHEN SHALL WE THREE MEET AGAIN?"

A STARLIGHT night in July. The hour late. Few lights on the river or its banks. A dog barking on board a lighter, that is moored on the Southwark side of the stream, is answered by another ashore. The air is heavy with the perfume of flowers from the several Strand palaces that have gardens, only separated from the river by partial embankments and handsome water-gates. A night for thieves and lovers, so still is it, so dark; a night full of shadows, which the stars seem to be watching.

Between the Savoy and Durham House there were private ways, seemingly to each and also to the river, as indeed there were to other houses, though known to few besides their owners. Durham House was not a little mysterious. On its Strand front, almost impinging on its courtyard or quadrangle, it had a cluster of thatched stables, picturesque enough no doubt to the modern imagination, but incongruous when compared with the noble façade and its magnificent marble columns by the river side of the main building.

The palace seemed, on the night in question, unguarded, though houses in those days were locked and barred and bolted, and had ponderous shutters. A suspicious company of three cloaked and armed men had spent some hours in reconnoitring Durham House and its various approaches. They had no need of cloaks, except in the way of disguises,

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for the weather was sufficiently warm, though there was a pleasant breeze from the river. The watch, or such as they called the watch in those days, a few superannuated dependents of the City, had tramped along the Strand towards Ludgate, with their occasional cry of the hour "and a starlit night." They shouldered their halberds and swung their lanterns with an air of bravery; but took care not to unduly disturb any depredators who might seem to threaten resistance or riot if obstructed in their affairs. They had caught a glimpse of the three cloaked and hooded figures disappearing in a by-way towards the river, their swords bulging out their cloaks; but they did not seek to question them.

"From the Mermaid, or the Apollo, he was to come," said the first ruffian; for so events showed him to be.

"Alone? Art sure?" asked the second one.

"Alone, and therefore unattended," replied the first.

"Or by the water-gate, in a boat from Whitehall," said the third.

"At this time of night? Go to, my lad; he's abed ere this."

"There's been no light in his turret-room since sunset, not glimmer enough to lure a moth; and 'tis his custom to read or write before he doth retire, whatsoever the hour that bringeth him from the Palace or the Mermaid."

"Then let's to the river," said the first speaker. "'Tis like enough he cometh from Whitehall; Her Majesty hath had a mask, 'tis said, and with late supper may be in the humour to delay our man in saying good-night. 'Tis a lively lady, considering her grey hairs."

"I know a Court barber who doth declare her bald."

"Nay; speak no treason of Her Majesty," said the first ruffian. "She knoweth how to deal with such as speak ill of her, though she doth damnable ill in the choice of her favourites."

They spoke in whispers, though there was none to overhear them, ensconced as they were in a stone niche of an outer wall, that commanded certain private ways both to the Savoy and the house they were watching.

They had evidently become a little weary of the business upon which they were engaged; and their employers, whomsoever they may have been, it would seem were not a little discouraged.

"Tis the tenth night of our campaign," said the first ruffian; whom, now that one comes to closer quarters, one finds to be the villain we called "the host," who trapped David Yarcombe; the other two evidently men of the same band. "The host," on this occasion, however, was engaged in a more serious fashion than playing the pretended part of the helpful friend and philanthropist.

"Mind you, comrades," he said, "this is no affair of purses or papers; 'tis the traitor's life, so long a-doing that, lest the plan of campaign be dulled in your memories, bethink you; 'tis an immediate onslaught, no parleying, no accommodation. We have been handsomely paid, and, the deed accomplished, there is more ready stored for our taking—in all, a fortune."

"And he *is* a traitor?" remarked the third ruffian, more by way of joining in the whispered conversation than to satisfy himself on a questionable point.

"A damned black traitor, who engrosses for himself all the Queen's patronage and love and what not. Hush! be wary. I hear the splash of oars. Come."

They crept within the shadow of high walls and overhanging gables, to reappear presently close by the water-gate of Durham House. But the splash of oars simply indicated a departing boat, a wherry that was making for the opposite bank of the river.

"He has escaped us again!" said the second ruffian, with an oath.

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"Nay. Listen!" whispered "the host," laying his hand upon the other's arm, as voices were heard and lights appeared at the bend of the river. "He comes from the Palace. Follow me."

In an angle of the wall there was a low door or postern-gate that led into the garden, a door used chiefly by the head-gardener for the unloading of trading boats carrying flowers and shrubs from florists, who exchanged with each other rare plants or dealt in the same. By treachery, or skilful theft, "the host" had obtained the key of the gate. He opened the door to his comrades and led them into the shade of a group of tall shrubs, by which their man would pass. Supposing their victim were attended, or that servants met him from the house, then they were to consider what their course would be; but it was his habit to enter the house alone and at all hours, being, as they were told, a man of mystery, and therefore dangerous to the State, and more particularly to Holy Church and. . . . But the boat has come alongside the stairs of the water-gate; and at the same moment another figure, besides the passenger who has landed from the barge, appeared on the scene, and on the heels of the ruffians who had just entered the gardens by the postern-gate. Like a good general, "the host" had left the door unlocked to ensure a safe retreat, alike in case of success or failure. . . . The fourth figure, whether he were of their gang or a spy, or had evil business of his own, bent low, and almost crawled after the villainous trio through the postern. Just at this moment the rowers of the barge raised their oars by way of salute to their evidently distinguished passenger, who returned the respectful "Good-night" of the captain of the little crew, and stood watching the lightly-built vessel slew round, under the command of "Back-water all," and presently shoot into mid-stream and disappear. . . . Then, unlocking the door

of the water-gate, he took from a niche of the inner wall a torch that had been placed there for his use, and entered the broad walk leading to the garden entrance of the house. Pausing suddenly, however, he raised the torch, and at the same moment drew his sword; well advised, more by instinct than the rustle he fancied he heard among the shrubs.

"Traitor!" exclaimed the first ruffian, rushing upon him. "Have at you!"

"And at you!" was the quick retort, with the torch thrust full in the villain's face; who falling back with a howl, the other two came on.

"Who has set you on to this?" the assailed one asked as he fenced with the attacking swords, a master of the art.

"Don't parley, men!" said the first ruffian. "Kill him, kill him!"

For a moment it seemed as if they might succeed; for they pressed their opponent with alertness and vigour, one of them edging to take him in the rear; at which the first ruffian, more or less *hors de combat*, staggered to their assistance with the torch, bent on a repetition of his opponent's tactics. But now he had to count upon a hostile reinforcement.

"Villain!" cried the new-comer, striking him down with a stunning blow of his fist, and making for the others, shouting, "A rescue, sir! A rescue!"

He was only just in time to catch the blade of the third ruffian, and run his own clean into his misbegotten carcass. Thereupon the second ruffian fled. "The host" began to gather himself together, and the torch was extinguished.

"Yield, ruffian, you are my prisoner!" said the new-comer, reaching out his hand to seize him; an indiscreet action, which nearly cost him his life. The assassin caught him by the wrist, and was only prevented from plunging a

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dagger into his breast by a ready thrust from the sword of the rescued gentleman.

"The host" fell back with a groan.

"Who set you on?" he was asked.

"As I hope to be forgiven, my Lord Essex," was the reply.

"On your oath! And at death's door you lie!"

"Nay, as you please, I'm sped," said the villain.

"Take the recollection of my face with thee to the other world," said the new-comer. "Canst see me?"

"Nay, trouble me not," said the dying thief; "violent trades have violent endings. Farewell!"

"A brave ruffian, I'll warrant you," said the gentleman, turning over the body of the one who was first to fall; while lights began to flash in the windows of the house, and servants to appear on the scene with torches.

"Bestow these bodies conveniently, and call the watch."

"And now, young sir—for though I can barely see your face, there is youth in the tone of your voice—to whom am I indebted for my life?"

"Nay; I think with such swordsmanship you would have done their business without me," was the modest reply.

"But for you I had been a dead man this moment, I make no doubt: and I have had experience of ambuscades and villainies of all kinds."

"My name is David Yarcombe," said the young fellow.

"David Yarcombe, well met! I am Sir Walter Raleigh," was the reply.

"My lord!" exclaimed David.

"My friend!" responded Sir Walter, taking David's hand. "Come, you must let me be your host."

"I am beholden to you, Sir Walter. 'Tis strange to pass from yonder host to your gracious hospitality; but the rogue, whose life has gone out with the torch, did make

himself my host when I was sorely pressed—and I owed him payment for the same."

"Then, surely, 'twas he who lured you to the tavern where Master Trevelion found traces of your adventure? . . . Nay, we will speak of it later. As for the hospitality of Durham House, you have paid for that in advance. . . . Nevertheless, ere bedtime you shall tell me how you came to be in my gardens without an invitation. Have you supped?"

"Only on sorrow; for I have lost that same dear friend, Master Trevelion."

"And found another dear friend, whom you shall never lose."

Sir Walter drew his companion's arm within his own; and, through a group of lackeys, some of them half-dressed, all greatly excited, they entered the house.

CHAPTER X

DAVID YARCOMBE IS INTRODUCED TO QUEEN ELIZABETH

DAVID needed all his fortitude and presence of mind to maintain his self-composure in presence of the lords and ladies, the officials, courtiers and guards, who seemed to throng the courtyard, halls and ante-rooms through which Sir Walter Raleigh made his way to the Queen's Privy Chamber, with the modest bearing of one who escorted a friend and the dignity of one in high authority.

The Queen's favourite was greeted with much show of courtesy, but with few cordial smiles. Raleigh was too accomplished, too learned, too powerful, to have many friends. Except by the soldiers and sailors whom he had commanded, few men loved him. He towered above his contemporaries in the splendour of his ambitions. He left it for posterity to estimate his character aright, and posterity has done him justice.

They passed through courtyards, along rush-strewn passage-ways, by rows of governmental offices, until by a private door they entered a low covered gallery, that gave upon the great hall or presence chamber, and opened in the midst of a scene that to David was as novel as it was impressive. Barons, earls, knights of the Garter, men of illustrious descent, weighty councillors, butterflies of the Court, a mixture of littleness and greatness, littleness none the less splendidly attired. Way was made for Sir Walter. He bowed himself through the crowd; and, pointing to

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a pillar near an adjacent doorway sentinelled by Yeomen of the Guard in their scarlet and gold uniforms, said to David, "Await me here; the Queen shall send for you."

David had rarely felt more embarrassed. He found himself not simply alone—that he could have endured with patience—but the object of what appeared to him to be a scornful curiosity. This puzzled him at first, and then angered him. He would have given anything to have provided one of the younger lords with an excuse to speak with him, even if it had been by way of offence and had led to a challenge. It vexed him the more, when he reflected that it was among this splendid rabble that Lucy had no doubt found many admirers; one, as he knew, more forward than the rest—my lord Essex. He had begun by hating Essex through the confession of the bravo who had attempted the life of Sir Walter; and his dislike was intensified by Lucy's own admission that Lord Essex had paid her particular attention, which she appeared to regard as a compliment from so great a lord, while David, with his country ideas, looked upon it as more in the nature of an insult. It was one of Lucy's boasts that she was treated with high consideration by the most notable gentlemen of the Court. She did not thereby desire to arouse David's jealousy, but to enhance his estimate of her personal attractions. It was unfortunate that Lucy did not understand David, any more than David rightly understood her.

Presently when he was beginning to feel a trifle less self-conscious of his fine clothes, an officer from the Privy Chamber beckoned David to follow him; whereat several of the younger lords smiled, as he thought, disdainfully. He would have liked to whip out his weapon and demand why they smiled; for, from a quiet, student-like youngster and a countryman, he had, all in a very short time become, if in a polite way, something of a swashbuckler.

Not that he invited quarrels ; but he was not averse to them, ever ready on reasonable provocation to use his weapon. His encounter with Kennock, as we have seen, had made a man of him in regard to the fighting characteristics of the day. The theorist and reveller in the romances of others had become an adventurer in practice. He was an attractive-looking youngster, with a swing in his gait that argued self-reliance. Added to a lithe, well-knit figure, he had a quiet if watchful eye ; but there was an expression in his face that was sad and thoughtful beyond his years. He wore his brocaded doublet and velvet jerkin, and carried his hat and plume with an air that might have become the descendant of the most ancient barony in the land.

In Her Majesty's Privy Chamber, the Queen was attended by a bevy of beautiful women, and many gallant gentlemen. If the courtiers had taken the cue of Nature in their radiant attire, disporting the liveliest colours, the ladies had not modelled their stomachers and gowns and head-dresses upon the fashion of the female bird. They were even gayer in colour and noisier in rustle of silks and tinkling of jewels than their supposed lords and masters.

As for the Queen, she was a dazzling example of splendidly disguised humanity. In spite of what to-day would be considered a burlesque of costume that might become a stage pantomime, Her Majesty was a dignified figure stately and majestic. It was wonderful that, consulting her mirror, she could still endure the flatteries of her favourites, who compared her beauty to Diana and Venus. She had a small hooked nose, wrinkled cheeks and forehead, and thin lips ; yet there was often a pleasant expression in her eyes, and she had a winning smile. When she was merely the Princess Elizabeth she must have been almost beautiful, certainly fascinating in every way, the charm of which she had

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not entirely lost when David Yarcombe knelt before her. Her dress was a marvellous invention, adorned with the most lovely gems. She wore red hair; in her ears were massive pearl-drops; on her head a small crown of gold; about her neck a collar of the same precious metal, enriched with many flashing stones; a white silk dress, bordered and otherwise ornamented with pearls. Her bosom was bare, her stomacher of abnormal length. Her ladies were all in white silks and satins; some of them standing by her semi-throne, others grouped apart, who furtively held cold converse with my lord Essex, Hatton, and others; while the Queen was engaged in a private conversation with Sir Walter Raleigh, which was interrupted by the entrance of the Lord Chamberlain, preceding Master David Yarcombe.

David had been well instructed. He saw no one but Her Majesty, and was down upon his knee at her feet the moment she had intimated her desire to speak with him. The Queen, looking him all over with her small piercing eyes, ungloved her right hand—a great mark of favour—and extended it with a gracious smile. David touched the jewelled fingers with his lips, and looked up at her with a blush that might have been a woman's, for it was almost at once eclipsed with a pallor that the Queen might well attribute to the impression of her beauty upon an unsophisticated youth.

"Our good servant and friend, Sir Walter Raleigh, hath acquainted us with your prowess and gallant conduct."

David listened with rapt attention.

"To have rid us of a disloyal, fanatic knave, and saved a life we treasure next our own——," she said, pausing to look round at Raleigh.

"Most gracious, most beloved Queen!" said Raleigh, with bowed head and reverent action.

"Nay, 'tis true," she said. "The Queen of England

knows how to value true service; and we thank you. Arise, Master Yarcombe."

David arose, and would have withdrawn, but the Queen signified that he should remain.

"You are of Devonshire?"

"Yes, your Majesty."

"The Yarcombes are of an ancient family, I am informed."

"One of my ancestors fought at Agincourt, your Majesty; otherwise we are yeomen."

"And shalt be a Yeoman of the Guard, eh, Captain Raleigh? What say you?"

"'Tis an honour he shall be worthy of, your Majesty."

"He hath the figure for it," she said, with a smile. "Meanwhile, look you, sir, you must come to Court, and I will bethink me if I cannot do better for you than to give you a guardsman's uniform;" with which gracious remark she dismissed the young hero.

Presently there was a bustle and flutter of silks and satins, and David found himself one of a procession to the Presence Chamber. For the first time he noticed that Mistress Throckmorton (now, secretly, as we know, Lady Raleigh) was nearest to the Queen. Her Majesty was speaking with her as they left the Privy Chamber; and as the regal company swept into the Presence Chamber, to the sound of trumpets, behold, among the ladies of the Court, David saw his sweetheart, Lucy Withycombe, radiant in brocaded silks, her fair white bosom exposed as was the fashion (and is to this day at the Court functions of Queen Victoria), Elizabeth setting the example.

Taking her seat upon the throne, with a dignity of manner not well supported by her personal appearance, Her Majesty proceeded to transact the business of the morning with her customary tact and firmness. She received and dismissed certain foreign Ambassadors, gracious to

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each, and with courteous words of friendship and love for their kings and governments. Then she heard sundry petitions, and indulged in an almost confidential conversation with my lord Essex, who, in retiring, had managed, in the shadow of the throne, to exchange glances with Lucy Withycombe that probably only David observed ; certainly it was done well out of the ken of Her Majesty. David thereupon moved towards the locality, and, as he did so, my lord Essex whispered something in my lady's ear at which she laughed ; and the next moment David stood between them, frowning.

"Did you address me?" asked his lordship, turning upon him, so apparent was David's anger.

"I would I might have that honour," David answered.

"I am glad you recognise that 'twould be an honour."

Brief as the incident was, the scene attracted attention.

"Give me leave, my lord," said Lucy, "to present my father's friend, Master David Yarcombe."

Essex, with a slight inclination of the head, hardly less rude to David than to the lady herself, passed on. Lucy blushed with vexation. For a moment David forgot where he was. All the world was blotted out. There only remained for him Lucy and Lord Essex. On the point of following Essex, he was restrained by a gentle but firm hand.

"My lord Burleigh does you the honour to request that you will wait upon him," said Raleigh, and led the boy away.

The audience at an end there was sudden talk among a group of the most serious of the illustrious persons present, in regard to a descent upon the shores of Spain ; but more particularly of an expedition to capture certain rich plate-ships, better known as the Indian Carracks, and after that, to make sail for Panama, and storm its treasury of pearls. It had been only after many petitions, and great and earnest

appeals, that Elizabeth for the first time had been willing to permit her favourite to risk in person the dangers of a perilous expedition beyond the narrow seas. She had, however, at last consented. He was to command a fleet of fifteen ships, the famous Martin Frobisher serving under him. Raleigh was also the chief adventurer of the expedition. He had invested in it all his available fortune. The Queen had contributed five thousand pounds to the adventure. Already the vessels were almost ready for sea; and Sir Walter informed David that their friend, Master Trevelion, would probably join the fleet, with his *S^t. Paul*, at Plymouth, though it might be he would reserve him for more important service and companionship in that vaster undertaking they had spoken of—the conquest of Guiana, and the discovery of the Golden City of Manoa.

Raleigh, at this moment, may be said to have been at the very height of his fame and power. Alas, the fall to come! . . . As he parted with David, in one of the small courtyards of the palace, he said, "Yonder door, on the left, leads to Mistress Throckmorton's rooms; you will find Mistress Withycombe already awaiting you. Be discreet, and keep your own counsel."

"My benefactor!" said David, with grateful emphasis.

"My friend!" replied Raleigh.

And a few minutes later David was with his mistress.

CHAPTER XI

PASSAGES IN LOVE'S TRAGIC CALENDAR

LUCY was not alone. Mistress Throckmorton was the first to greet him. Lucy offered her hand shyly.

"My dear Master Yarcombe, pray accept my hearty congratulations," said Mistress Throckmorton, of whose recent marriage neither David nor Lucy had any knowledge. "Her Majesty was more than gracious to you."

"Far beyond my deserts."

"You must allow Lucy and me to disagree with you in that opinion."

"You are all too gracious," he said. "I shall never be able to repay Sir Walter for his generosity."

"Nor he you, for the service you rendered him when his life was in peril; so you are quits, dear Master Yarcombe," said Mistress Throckmorton, "though I pray you may never think so; thus shall you be ever true and devoted friends. What say you, Lucy?"

"The friendship of Sir Walter Raleigh is as a patent of nobility, and David is no less fortunate than brave," she answered.

David bowed with a little too much formality Mistress Throckmorton thought.

"Lucy tells me she fears that Lord Essex hath angered you."

"Lord Essex, methinks, might have showed more respect for Lucy, and a less arrogant opinion of himself; but——"

"You were hasty and ill-advised," said Lucy, interrupting him. "He did but pay me a little passing attention, and Mistress Throckmorton will tell you that——"

"While a passing attention from Lord Essex means, of course, to our dear Lucy nothing more than a mere flattering courtesy, and in other eyes a token of distinction, it is not to be seriously estimated or encouraged. Lucy understands this, and appreciates it; but our lily of Littleham, my dear David, was made to torture vain women with envy, and to inspire the flattery of men. She brings to Court the beauty of Devon, with the freshness of its exhilarating atmosphere, and you must not be angry if the Court has the good taste to recognise it. If I did not know how sensible Lucy is, and how capable to guard her good name and maintain the dignity of our Devon women, I would not have brought her to London. I wanted to say this to you before I leave you together. You must not be jealous, David; I will answer for Lucy."

Poor Bessie! If she could only have answered for herself! But she knew Lucy's little foibles, and how trifling they were compared with the girl's honourable character; how underlying her animated enjoyment of life, her love of admiration, what a strong fence of honour there was, and how deep a sense of self-respect.

Bessie Throckmorton offered her hand to David. He kissed it, remarking, "I am greatly beholden to you, dear Mistress Throckmorton, and I am your most devoted servant to command."

"And now, do you want to scold me again?" Lucy asked with a pouting lip, but at the same time lifting her face to his, tears in her eyes.

"Nay, not I, dearest," he answered, taking her into his arms and kissing her; "yet I think, verily, I love you most when most I do scold you."

"But, dear love, 'tis not to my taste to be rated at."

"You prefer the sweet compliments of Mistress Throckmorton. Well, then, let me tell you that she spoke nought but what is true. You are beautiful, Lucy; there is the liquid blue of the ocean in your eyes, and there is nought to compare with your lips, except the cherries in our dear Devonshire orchards."

"I only desire to be beautiful for your sake, David," she answered, and she laid her head upon his shoulder. "But let me remind you that since we left the Exe we have only thrice met each other in London, and thrice you have saluted me with a homily."

"Thrice have we met? Nay, it seems but once, so brief our intercourse; yet do I remember every incident of them. First, we had time enough to let me assure you that I was safe and sound. The second, just time enough for you to tell me how you fared at Court, and for me to mention some of my adventures. I thank the Fates that at this third encounter I have had time and permission to steal a kiss or two, and recall our happy days at Exmouth and Littleham."

"But Sir Walter, prior to our second meeting, had informed me of the nature of your arrival in the Thames, and of your wandering away from the object of your visit, and the penalty thereof; not forgetting your rescuers; and if you lingered too long with the Lysons, I forgive you, for the gallant deed that at last brought you to Durham House without a formal presentation."

"I blamed myself that I did not make straight for Durham House the moment I landed from Trevelion's ship; but surely Fate led me to Paul's Walk, that I might eventually reach Durham House with a passport not to be denied."

"I should like to see this Mitre House," said Lucy, after David had related in detail some of the incidents of his escape from the assassins of Paul's Walk.

"It would interest you."

"Part of a ruined monastery, you say?"

"Yes; destroyed by King Henry."

"But with whole rooms, enough for a pleasant home?"

"Yes."

"Is she pretty? I mean your nurse."

"I think so."

"What is she like?"

"A kindly, sweet, and natural young woman."

"But what is her complexion? What kind of eyes hath she?"

"Dark, melancholy eyes; and an almost olive complexion."

"An Indian?"

"Oh no; an English girl, probably of French or Spanish descent."

"Oh!"

David stole his arm about Lucy's waist.

"You like dark, melancholy eyes?" she asked.

"They are in keeping with Mary Lysons' face."

"No doubt."

"As your deep blue eyes befit your fair Devonian countenance."

"Indeed!"

"She has a soft sympathetic voice," David went on, in a tone of banter, though he did not exaggerate the personal attractions of his benefactress.

"So you no longer care for blue eyes and cheerful faces?"

"I always liked yours."

"Liked!" she said, withdrawing herself from his embrace.

"Liked! And I was foolish enough to believe you loved me; but it is only that you like me, after all! It is Mary Lysons you love, with her dusky skin and her dark melancholy eyes."

"My dear!" replied David, now deeply in earnest, "you are surely not jealous?"

"Not more jealous than you; yet quite as much."

"I did not place myself in the way of Mary Lysons," he said.

"Mary Lysons!" she repeated, her face flushing. "You are very familiar with her."

"It is quite natural that I should be; she was my nurse, you know."

"Continually in your bed-chamber, I suppose?"

"For many days, yes; and when I came to myself, I thought she was an angel."

"But now she is nearer the earth and more accessible; and calls you David, I suppose?"

"She calls me Master Yarcombe; and was just as kind and solicitous while she thought me a rogue and ruffler; for I was wearing the bandit's jerkin, and there were vile documents in his pouch, and among the gold in his purse certain counterfeits."

"And where was her mother, what time she was nursing you?"

"Attending to her household duties, I presume; for they had no servants, lest they should be betrayed on account of their religious observances. They had a private subterranean way to the chapel I told you of."

"And they have made you a Papist, as well as a lover?"

"Nothing could make me a Papist; and I have been a lover, almost as long as I can remember."

"Oh, indeed! And who may the fortunate damsel be whom you have persuaded to return your affection?" asked Lucy, with well-acted curiosity.

"The loveliest maiden in all the world when she did return my fond passion; but then she lived with nature, and was content to be worshipped by one simple lover."

"And he was content, I suppose, to be that one simple lover, until he began to long for adventures, and fell into the hands of Papist maidens with dark melancholy eyes and——"

"Nay, sweetheart!" exclaimed David, suddenly seizing her, though not without a struggle, and kissing her fairly on the lips. "You shall not do yourself the wrong, nor me either, to think I could love another."

"Yet I seem to no longer enjoy your confidence—— since your acquaintance with Mistress Lysons, the Papist maiden, with the dark melancholy eyes."

"I had not then had the high fortune to be presented to Her Majesty; I had not witnessed for myself the licence of this virgin Court. Oh, it galls me to the quick to know that the gallants, with their empty heads and hollow hearts, have made you their toast."

"How dare you say so?"

"Because it is true. Moreover, did I not to-day see with mine own eyes the coquettish smile with which you received Lord Essex's whispered impertinences? Did I not note the nods and nudges of the grinning anatomies who misinterpreted your unsophisticated acknowledgments of their grimaces? Did I not——"

"Oh, spare me!" Lucy exclaimed, rising to her feet. "And spare yourself these innuendoes. Speak what is in your heart. You say you love me. I know you believe that I also love you. And yet you treat me thus! You think me a feather-brain; that I can bear: but you do not trust me; and that I will not bear."

"Does the shepherd trust his pet lamb among wolves?"

"He would be a poor shepherd if he did," Lucy answered; "though Master Trevelion would say you had not fared ill among the wolves of the Mitre House, with their Papal snares and, no doubt, their thumbscrews and things hidden in the wainscot."

"You are unreasonable, Lucy!"

"Nay; 'tis you that are unreasonable. Would you have me a country Molly at Court, a mere ninny, or a prude frightened at her own virtue, brushed aside by titled dames and scoffed at by the Queen's ladies? I would have them know, lords and ladies, that the Withcombes are no plebeians, and that Lucy of that ilk can hold her own with the best of them! And if Master David Yarcombe doth object, because I have not dark melancholy eyes and a soft low voice, and have not nursed him, why, Master David Yarcombe can go back to Mary Lysons, and leave the girl he professes to love, but only likes, to her own devices."

"Lucy!" exclaimed David, detaining her; "you wrong me; you wrong yourself. You would not be so angry if there was not at least a grain of reason in my jealousy of Lord Essex; and I own it, that, deep in my heart, I am jealous of that most officious and presuming lord."

"Better complain to the Queen, and I will confess your Mary Lysons! That would end things; two more heads on London Bridge, and perhaps the pretty martyrdom of a Papist saint," Lucy replied, with flashing eyes, her bosom swelling with unrestrained emotion.

"Lucy!"

"I know what I have said."

"Lucy, my darling!"

"Don't darling me any more. You have goaded me into an unwomanly passion."

"Lucy, dearest!"

"And now you know the sort of stuff I am really made of! You consent to my coming to Court, and think it possible I can be still the tame inexperienced thing you left at Littleham. I wish I were dead!"

"Lucy, my dear," said David, vainly trying to take

her to his arms, until at last she flung herself upon a seat and sobbed.

Presently, however, she permitted his embrace; but only to recover her composure sufficiently to complain that to upbraid her and bring false charges against her was not the way to make her believe that he truly loved her; a conclusion that may not be gainsaid.

Worse, however, for love's content than these scenes between David and Lucy was the habit David had contracted of going to the Mitre House for comfort and recreation, the comfort of a strange peacefulness, in striking contrast with the atmosphere of Whitehall Palace and even Durham House, and the recreation of Mary Lysons' complaisant attention to all he said and her father's stories of adventure (he had been a soldier in foreign service), and her mother's tender solicitude for David's welfare. A calm, religious, restful atmosphere; religious without any one naming it, for the Lysons respected his faith, as he tolerated theirs. Mary would tell him some of the things he had said in his delirium. His dreams had been mostly of strange lands beyond the sunset. Little did David imagine that he had kindled in that pure heart the first timorous dawn of love, the tender pain of mingled hope and doubt, destined to end in despair.

Until David Yarcombe came to the Mitre House only one way of life had seemed to lie before Mary Lysons, and it led to a monastery in France. When, after weeks of darkness, he opened his eyes once more to the world, another path began to show faintly; tortuous, but strewn with the flowers of a new fancy. As the days came and went, and he followed her about the sick-room with gentle glances and called her his good angel, she saw two lovers traversing that floral path, and her heart beat with a

rapture even transcending the bliss she had found in the sensuous observances of the secret chapel of the Mitre House. . . .

But, with the blindness and natural arrogance of a man, David, all unknowing, had obliterated the flowery pathway that Mary had seen for a moment contrasting the severity of the other road. All suddenly, the flowers had withered, the song-birds in her heart had stopped singing, a resigned sadness gave minor tones to her voice, and to her eyes the languor that comes of an unconfessed disappointment.

One day, when David came to take his leave and brought gifts that he desired the Lysons to accept in remembrance of him, he unconsciously, in his liberality of sentiment, touched with a parting pang the saddest chord in the girl's heart. His offering to Mary Lysons was a Cross of beaten gold, with an inlaid image of the Saviour, wrought by the hand of a master of the goldsmith's craft. It struck her for a moment as a rebuke to an unholy ambition. Though she had made no pledge to the Church of voluntary immurement, her mind had contemplated no other destiny until she knew David Yarcombe; and it was he who, at parting, seemed to expunge the last glimmer of that other path, in which for a short while she had walked in trembling hope of a love not less beautiful than that of the cloister.

"And when you marry Mistress Withycombe," she said, "give her this from me, with a sister's prayers for her happiness."

She took from her finger the only ring she had ever worn; it was a gold band, with an inlaid rim of dull gems.

"It was my sister's ring of betrothal; she died ere she had been a wife two years; I promised, if ever I did wed, I would give it to my husband. Nay, take it; I shall be the happier, thinking of its destiny; and I am already betrothed to the Church. After to-day, you may only think of me as one of the sisterhood of Saint Martha that is at

Tours, and as one who will pray for your happiness and hers. Christ and the Blessed Virgin have you and her in their keeping !”

“Good-bye,” she said ; and she knew that it was good-bye for ever.

As he turned and left the house, she felt that she would never see him again. He did not know that she loved him. She knew that he loved another. He had told her so. It was as if some one had said to her : “The young man whom you nursed to life has died after all.” Only in the next world could she ever hope to hold his hand again. Would it be in the mild Purgatory that was to be the passage-way to Paradise for the elect ? Even then he would be another’s. And she would have been forsworn the dear embrace here and hereafter ; for now, at last, she had resolved to enter a convent. What a strange world ! How dared she think so ? How dared she criticise it ? And yet it would have been better they had never met ; for her love of him was continually in the way of her whole-soul love of God, and her worship of Mary, the Mother of God !

She sat by her window, and counted the strokes of Paul’s clock. Presently, flinging herself before a crucifix, she prayed for mercy and forgiveness, and a pure heart ; and that David Yarcombe, whom she had been permitted to succour, might have Christ’s protection ; even though he were heretic, that he might be brought to a true knowledge of God and His Holy Church. There was a little underlying proviso she could not keep back, that, whether he were Lutheran or Catholic, God would not cast him out, that the Blessed Virgin would be good to him for her sake, and put upon her any penance if need be, that should absolve her from the wickedness of this petition, if it were wicked.

It had seemed to her that God had intervened to rescue David from the assassins, and that therefore it might be a

holy wish that He would continue to watch over him. Later, when she came to confess that she had loved David Yarcombe, the priest, being in this case both man and priest, and having in his own heart the memory of a boyish love, gave her, with the slightest penance, absolution, and comforted her with kindly sympathetic words ; but the pang of parting was never quite allayed in the tender heart of Mary Lysons.

CHAPTER XII

DAVID RUNS AGAINST LORD ESSEX AND RALEIGH IS ARRESTED

FOR a brief space London was to David a paradise. It would have been without alloy, but for an occasional incursion of the serpent. Every earthly paradise has its serpent. The worm that harassed David was jealousy. No greater monster, in reality or imagination, was ever designed for the mental torture of poor humanity. David was fool enough not to see that Lucy Withycombe's coqueties were the harmless outcome of her novel position—a country belle suddenly transformed into a Court lady, and not that alone, but a Court lady whose beauty had been remarked even by Her Majesty.

Lucy had her moods. She loved David truly, spite of her vagaries; and now and then she was in the humour to let him understand how deep and true was her devotion. So one day David would be the happiest of men. The next day, Lucy's healthful blood coursing through her young veins, she would fling back the daring glance of Essex with a defiant yet half-inviting response; or challenge some other no less handsome courtier with a witticism or pleasant rejoinder to a compliment; and David was wretched. Then he would sulk.

If Mary Lysons had not started on her sacred mission to Tours, and the Mitre House was thus practically closed to him, he might still have gone there for consolation. Mistress

Throckmorton used all her influence to check the exuberant spirits of Lucy, but without avail; and she could not be angry with the girl, for Lucy was her greatest comfort. Her ladyship had serious anxieties of her own, as Lucy well knew, and nothing could have exceeded the loving solicitude of the girl for her gentle mistress. If the harass of a love that was racked with jealousy had not disturbed David's peace of mind, he had a mighty resource in the turret-room of his patron, Sir Walter Raleigh, who had left him sole master of Durham House in his absence.

The Queen had at last permitted Sir Walter to undertake his long projected expedition against the Spaniards in the West Indies, and for many weeks David lived like a lord. Had his mind been at rest, he might have followed up his studies with exceptional facilities in Sir Walter's remarkable library, where the master had burnt the midnight oil over the inspiring tomes that filled his shelves—records of the discoveries of Bartholomew De Diaz, who first doubled the Cape of Good Hope; Vasco de Gama, who had crossed the Indian Ocean; the adventures of "Christopher Colombo"; the romance of Prester John; the travels of William de Rubruquis and Marco Polo; not to mention those works on Peru that had fired the ambition of Raleigh in regard to the unoccupied territory of Guiana, such as the marvellous revelations of Pedro de Cieza de Leon, Miguel Balboa, José de Acosta (one of the newest Spanish volumes in the library), and the valuable writings of the learned lawyer, Polo de Ondegardo, of which there was a translation in manuscript, bound in vellum. Better still, David might have poured over Sir Walter's own annotations of the voyages of Vincent Yanez Pinzon, Vasco Nunez, and Diego de Ordas, and the private reports of Captain Whiddon, and the intercepted dispatches to the King of Spain, brought to Durham House by Sidmouth Trevelion, all having regard to Guiana, and some to that "Golden

City of Manoa," which had for so long filled the imagination of the Queen's favourite, Captain of the Guard, and sage adviser.

Sir Walter had given David the keys of all these treasures. Had his *protégé* been vouchsafed a glimpse into the future, he would have revelled in the histories, maps, plans, and documents over which the "Golden City of Manoa" had, for Raleigh, shed a new ray of splendour, blazoned with specimens of the gold and pearls of Mexico and Peru. The latter were "mere dross compared with the treasures of Guiana," as Sir Walter was well informed. But David, alone in London, lived far less in the future than he had lived in Devonshire, where his fancy had its full play undisturbed by the spangs of jealousy, and the petty ambitions of a Court; every man and woman, from the highest to the lowest, competing—often meanly enough—for the smiles of the Queen. Yet the busy ships in the Thames came and went, on their missions of trade and conquest, and the town was in continual expectation of a descent of the enemy on the coasts.

Meanwhile, the fleet, which was to attack the Spaniards and sack Panama, was delayed by various accidents for many weeks. It eventually sailed on May 6th, 1592. The next day Sir Martin Frobisher overtook Raleigh with a letter from the Queen recalling him. Conceiving that his honour was too deeply engaged for so quick a withdrawal, he continued at sea until all hopes of carrying out his original scheme were upset by the delay in sailing. He left the command of the fleet to Sir Martin Frobisher and Sir John de Burgh, with orders to cruise on the coast of Spain and the Islands. The ships spread themselves, for prizes and for battle, and Raleigh returned to London.

While Sir Walter was raging at the contrary winds that kept him inactive at sea, his enemies were busy at home.

Bessie Throckmorton began to experience a feeling of embarrassment in presence of the Queen. Her Majesty questioned her curiously about Sir Walter. It was evident that the Queen suspected the nature of her relationship with her favourite Captain of the Guard. One has to confess that the farthingale was useful to the poor lady; though it was no defence against the significant glances of certain of the maids of honour, who were less fair and had been less favoured by the Queen. Despite much assertion of innocence and the pose of Elizabeth, Her Majesty's maids were not more beyond suspicion than Swift asserts Anne's to have been, in which he is upheld by one of Raleigh's most recent and interesting biographers, William Stebbing. "Lord Essex's gallantries at Court, after and before his marriage, were notorious. Lord Southampton and his bride were the subjects of a similar tale a few years later. Palace gossip treated it as a very ordinary peccadillo. Cecil, in February, 1601, tells Carew of the 'misfortune' of one of the maids, Mistress Fritton, with Lord Pembroke, as if it were a jest. 'Both the culprits,' he remarked, 'will dwell in the Tower awhile.' His phrases show none of the horror they breathed when he spoke of Raleigh, and the Queen was likely to read them. The English Court was pure in the time of Elizabeth for its time." But had it been immaculate, poor Bessie Throckmorton could not have been more cruelly treated. Her supposed condition changed the attitude of Lucy Withycombe's admirers towards the friend and companion of the sweet and gentle woman. They did not hesitate to insult her; not, of course, in word, but by knowing nods and smiles. And when Lucy Withycombe, now realising the terrible situation, resented what hitherto she had rather counted, her admirers, more especially Lord Essex, forced their attentions upon her in a manner that brought tears to her eyes. She dared say

nothing to David, even had he been at hand, lest he should strengthen the scandal concerning her dear friend and mistress, by challenging men right and left, as she felt sure he would. Fortunately, at the first blush of trouble Mistress Throckmorton had sent him off, post-haste, to try and overtake her lord ; but David had been unable to come up with the fleet, though he had made a great effort to do so by the aid of one of the swiftest barks he could obtain at Plymouth.

When he returned he found that Her Majesty's favourite lady-in-waiting and Lucy had left Whitehall. They had not been dismissed, but had obtained leave from Her Majesty to absent themselves for a time, that Mistress Throckmorton, who had been in ill-health for some weeks, might have the benefit of a change of air. Her Majesty would not see them, that they might take their leave. Lord Cecil, however, had met them in the ante-room of the Queen's Chamber and been most gracious and sympathetic, and hoped Sir Walter would soon return to justify Mistress Throckmorton, for whom he expressed the most sincere esteem and respect ; words that in after years she had reason to know were honest, as they were at the moment welcome and comforting. Sir Walter certainly did not leave England confident that all would be well in his absence. He had arranged that, in case of need, his wife should return to his house at Sherborne, where he had given orders for her reception at any moment ; and it was here that Lady Raleigh was put to bed ; here that, as wife and mother, she won the unstinted eulogium of History.

"Any show of affection at Court was deemed an act of guilt, and from consciousness of guilt to the reality," says Stebbing, "is not always a wide step. In Raleigh's references and language to his wife may be detected a tone in the tenderness as though he owed reparation as well as attachment. The redeeming feature of their passion is that

they loved with true love and also with a love which grew." It was Camden, in his "Annals," who first explained Raleigh's crime and punishment: "*honoris Regine virginis vitiatâ, quam postea in uxorem duxit.*" It is not difficult to agree with Mr. Gosse in his estimation of the crime, in which he takes a similar view to that of Mr. Stebbing, but with greater directness. "Raleigh's clandestine relations with Elizabeth Throckmorton were not in themselves without excuse. To be the favourite of Elizabeth, who had now herself attained the sixtieth summer of her immortal charms, was tantamount to a condemnation to celibacy. The vanity of Belphebê would admit of no rival among high or low, and the least divergence from devotion justly due to her own imperial loveliness was a mortal sin. What is less easy to forgive in Raleigh than that, at the age of forty, he should have rebelled at last against this tyranny, is that he seems in the crisis of his embarrassment to have abandoned the woman to whom he could write long afterwards, 'I chose you and loved you in my happiest times.' After this brief dereliction, however, he returned to his duty, and for the rest of his life was eminently faithful to the wife whom he had taken under such painful circumstances."

This "dereliction" was his appeal to the Queen from prison. For, immediately on landing, the Queen, without seeking explanation or excuse, committed him straight to the Tower. History is inclined to be harsh with him for that, ignoring his wife or the "crime" for which he was imprisoned, he "filled the air with the picturesque clamour of his distress," and his protestations of devotion to the Queen. No one, however, except the Queen, could take seriously his professedly heartbroken desire to behold "the idol of his heart" once again—he, as it has been well said, a soldier of forty; she, a maiden of sixty! Yet it is true enough that he wrote her letters from the Tower, in the heated imagery of a wild passion and an unswerving

devotion. He, that was wont to "behold her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks like a nymph; sometimes sitting in the shade like a goddess; sometimes singing like an angel; sometimes playing like Orpheus"; she was gone from him, and he was left in a "dark prison all alone." A subtle touch, that "dark prison." Raleigh could write picturesque prose as deftly as he could turn an amorous sonnet; and any one can see that this was not a love-letter, but an attack on a woman's vanity, by a man whom she had tied by the leg. It was a comedy of passion, and he kept it up until it was as good, or as bad, as a play.

To David Yarcombe, however, all this was tragic. His sweetheart flown, his patron a prisoner, he was at a loss what to do. His first duty he conceived to be to Her Majesty. She had commanded him to come to Court. More than once she had honoured him with special marks of her favour. On one occasion she had asked him what she could do to advance his interests. He replied that he would consult his chief, Sir Walter Raleigh. "Thou'rt right in that," she said. "There is none so keen to advance his friends, except when his own interests are to be considered." But coming to Whitehall now, at the accepted time of audience, he was informed by the chamberlain that Her Majesty would dispense with his further presence at Court, but he might, if he thought fit, attend Sir Walter Raleigh at the Tower.

"In what capacity!" exclaimed the lad, with the manliness of a veteran. "As a prisoner? Or a free man?"

"Nay, as a free man," said the chamberlain.

"Free man or prisoner," he replied, drawing himself up to his full height, "my place is by his side; and I have yet to learn that the Tower is a much worse place than the ante-room of Her Majesty's presence chamber."

"Thou wilt do well to reserve thy condemnation of Her Majesty's ministers and servants for some safer place," said the official. "And a word in thine ear; thou art young and rash. It were greater service to thy friend and patron if thou shouldst use the soft words of diplomacy rather than the noisy language of offence. Her Majesty has been good to thee; she is kindly to Sir Walter Raleigh that she doth permit thee to visit him."

"I thank you, sir," David replied, doffing his hat. "The Queen has no more ready champion than your humble servant, except it is my most chivalrous chief and master."

As he bowed and turned to the doorway, he had the misfortune to run against my lord Essex, who, for an earl, took the accidental contact with an ill-mannered rebuke; whereupon David, following him almost to the presence chamber, there laid his hand upon his shoulder, since he did not deign to notice David's polite apology.

"I begged your pardon, sir," said David.

"'Tis well. Stand aside!" was the curt reply.

"That is no answer to a courteous excuse for the untoward accident of brushing your magnificence with my jerkin."

"Then take that for thy guerdon," said Essex, hitting him a box on the ear; "and if one might go out with a base-born churl, I would fight you."

"But, by God, you will fight me!" said David.

Essex was just as young and just as headstrong and rash as David; and it was useless that the chamberlain and several of the Queen's guards attempted to step between David and his assailant.

"Defend yourself," said David, "or I'll crop your ears, if you were forty times a lord!"

The Queen, who had just entered the presence chamber, heard the noise, and sent out to learn the cause of the

disturbance ; and before David could sheathe his sword, he was seized and brought before the Queen, Essex at the same time standing forward, ruffled and flushed with anger.

"God's body !" exclaimed Her Majesty. "A brawl, almost in my very presence. And you, my lord Essex, having no longer Master Raleigh to curl your lip at and wag your tongue against, art reduced to flouting his lackey ?"

"Pardon, gracious Queen," said David, kneeling at her feet ; "I am no man's lackey."

"What then dost think thou art, ingrate ?"

"Nor any ingrate, either," said David ; and the Queen, while keeping up her show of anger, was pleased with the young man's boldness.

"I am a gentleman, your Majesty, and grateful beyond expression for your Majesty's favour."

The Queen had tired of the haughty devotion of Essex, and was willing to humiliate him.

"So, because you are a gentleman and grateful for your Queen's favour, you make a brawl at her doors, and justify your removal to the Tower."

"An it please your Majesty send me to a worser place, an there be one. I am your most humble, devoted servant."

"God's body, I believe you ! Stand up, Master Yarcombe. My lord Essex, on your allegiance, how came it about, this most unseemly disturbance ?"

"Your Majesty, this fellow ran against me."

"Why 'this fellow' ? Why not this gentleman ? His ancestor fought at Agincourt."

Essex noted, with chagrin, the smile of amusement with which the Queen looked around upon the Court, and felt that she intended to humiliate him.

"Nay, your Majesty, if it please my lord to call me a fellow, baulk him not."

"Silence, sirrah!" said the Queen; "thou art too bold, methinks."

David, who had spoken on bended knee, rose and stepped back, abashed.

"He ran against you?" said the Queen. "Gad's life! as if he were a bull at the baiting? He hath an awkward look, 'tis true; and he had not the grace to apologise?"

"He had the temerity to draw upon me, your Majesty."

"For the which, you are willing to cut his throat. Lord Chamberlain, what say you?"

"The gentleman apologised to my lord; who declined to accept it, and regretted he could not fight with him because he was a base-born churl."

"Is this true, my lord?" asked the Queen, her anger returning.

"It is, your Majesty," said Essex. "But I pray your Grace to let us to the business of the Council."

"God's body! This is the business of the Council, my lord, and I am the Council; and whether you will or no, I forbid you to fight. Dost hear, sirrah?"

She turned, with a muttered oath, to David, who bowed to the ground, with the grace of the most perfect of courtly practitioners.

"And you, Essex?"

"I shall obey your Majesty."

"I hope so," said the Queen.

Lord Essex responded with a haughty inclination of the head that did not escape Her Majesty's attention.

"Get you gone, Master Yarcombe. I gave you permission to visit your chief, as ye call him—the traitor, Sir Walter Raleigh."

David was on the point of exclaiming: "He is no traitor, your Majesty"; but thought better of it, and withdrew.

"My lord Burleigh," said the Queen, "we crave your

indulgence for this delay in the consideration of State affairs."

"Most gracious Queen," said the great and judicious minister, "we are your Majesty's loving servants."

David made his way to the Tower, a free man. . . . It was but a short time afterwards that Essex was conducted thither a prisoner.

CHAPTER XIII

"PUT NOT YOUR TRUST IN PRINCES' FAVOURS"

R ALEIGH was arrested in June, and released in September. Imprisonment was painful to him for very different reasons from those which had dictated his appeals to the Queen. He knew the only way to Her Majesty's heart was through her vanity or her pocket. At first he appealed to her vanity. It was through her pocket that she was finally touched with pity for her prisoner. But for the presence of David Yarcombe, and the opportunity thus afforded of sending messages to his wife, his confinement under the circumstances would have been maddening. It was a consolation that he was enabled to assure his wife that he had all he required in his prison apartments except her sweet society. He did not mention the cause of her illness; though in a letter some years afterwards he is understood to have referred to the birth of a daughter, who did not live long enough to feel the pinch of his necessities, as he feared she might. At his richest Sir Walter doubted his capacity to maintain his estates, seeing how vast were the sums of money he had invested to initiate that Colonial Empire which is the glory and strength of England under Victoria.

The occasion of Sir Walter's release from imprisonment for the crime of loving Bessie Throckmorton was the return of certain of his expeditionary ships. Soon after he left the fleet Robisher and de Burgh sent home a prize of six

hundred tons burden, the *Santa Clara*. West of Flores they were disappointed of the *Santa Cruz*, of nine hundred tons, which her officers burnt; but soon afterwards the great Crown of Portugal carrack, the *Madre de Dios*, was sighted. Three of the English ships engaged her. She had eight hundred men on board. The fight was long and obstinate. Raleigh's commanders captured her. She had stores of precious stones, amber, spices, and musk. Her cargo of pepper alone was said to be worth a hundred thousand pounds. She also had on board fifteen tons of ebony, besides tapestries, silks, and satins. When she arrived at Dartmouth—these reports having preceded her—the place was like a fair. Before the vessel came into port there was some pilfering of the cargo. It was in vain that de Burgh embargoed it all as the Queen's. Precious stones, pearls, and musk were portable, and easily carried in breeches-pockets. Moreover, the crew were filled with resentment at their master, Raleigh, being a prisoner. The Queen's Council sent down Lord Cecil to hold the treasure intact. Sir John Hawkins had sent to Lord Burleigh, saying that for the division of the spoil Raleigh was the especial man; and so, by appealing to the well-known covetousness of the Queen, Burleigh obtained Raleigh's release from the Tower; and away he went to Dartmouth, but not entirely a free man.

It was with great satisfaction that, soon after arriving at Dartmouth, Sir Walter was able to send David Yarcombe to Sherborne with letters and fond messages to his wife. Herein he acquainted her with the efforts he had made to obtain release from the Tower, his fulsome letters to the Queen, his pretended attempt at suicide, and other theatrical tricks likely to impress Her Majesty; but how, at last, she was only touched by Sir John Hawkins's and Lord Burleigh's appeal to her cupidity and selfishness. It is probable, however, that the Queen was not altogether

so great a slave to her vanity as Sir Walter had imagined. She must have detected the want of a true ring in his fulsome expressions of adulation. Contemplated from this distance of time, they border on the burlesque. They are no more like genuine love-letters than the high-falutin valentines of the shop-windows that herald February in these latter days. Bessie Throckmorton knew how necessary it was to Raleigh's position, and indeed to his very existence, that he should seem to return with fervour the Queen's passion, and she favoured his apparent neglect of herself even when she was his wife, that his national and colonial schemes might be promoted through his influence with Her Majesty.

But this is by the way. Raleigh was received with joy by the sailors and the people of Dartmouth. The prize cargo, after many exaggerated reports, was valued at one hundred and forty thousand pounds; and of this eighty thousand were given to the Queen. Raleigh and Hawkins (who had expended thirty-six thousand apiece on the venture to the Queen's eighteen hundred) were awarded just about what they had spent. Raleigh grumbled a little to Burleigh, but was glad to give up his prize-money for his liberty. Dismissed the Court, he settled down for a time at Sherborne, where he was joined by David Yarcombe. Lucy Withycombe was still in attendance upon Lady Raleigh. This gave David a fine opportunity to make up their lovers' quarrels. There still, however, unhappily remained a shadow upon his wooing. He encouraged unpleasant reminiscences of Lucy's light-heartedness in town, her evident pride of conquest at Court, her flirtation with Lord Essex, and her professed jealousy of Mary Lysons. David was not judicious in his passing allusions to Mary, and Lucy was sceptical concerning the ring Mary had given him. He offered it to Lucy, who declined it. She reminded him that

it was to be a gift to the woman he should make his wife. They were not married yet, she urged; and there was "many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." David had some very miserable hours to chequer his happiness at Sherborne by reason of these little passages of jealousy. True love should be frank. It is false pride and jealousy that too often muddy its course.

Lucy Withycombe's mother being taken dangerously sick, Lucy felt bound to return to Littleham. David had the privilege of being one of her escort to the nearest port for Topsham, and they parted for the time being on good terms. But they were neither of them quite happy. Parting should be a sweet sorrow. Unfortunately Lucy could not see David's point of view with David's eyes, nor he contemplate her attitude through hers. Their controversies, about Lord Essex on one side and Mary Lysons on the other, had left a sting behind; the tiniest pin-prick. They had both missed the opportunity of applying the antidote of mutual concession; and they parted, conscious of an incompleteness in their confidence in each other that clouded their affections. "When the heart is full, the lips are silent." Lucy looked all she had to say; but David could not read the sign. So they both went their ways sorrowfully.

There was soon to be another and more serious opportunity for making up for this lost time; and one may venture a hope that love would find the way for the most perfect reconciliation. . . . Almost every moment of David's intercourse with Sir Walter at Sherborne was connected with Raleigh's plans for the conquest of Guiana.

Book IV

WITH THE PIONEERS AND THE NOBLE WOMEN THEY LEFT BEHIND THEM

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING OF MANY STRANGE ADVENTURES

TO an imaginative mind Nature might have seemed to be offering an encouraging welcome to the little fleet of adventurous ships that cast anchor in Plymouth Sound on the 6th day of February, 1595. It was a time of great hopes, and doubts, and fears. The wood-lark had piped its very earliest song of good cheer as Lucy Withycombe and her father left Littleham on their way to Plymouth; and the thrush was singing by Plymouth Hoe, while they waited and watched for the English fleet. On their way they had noted the elder-tree disclosing its flower-buds, and the catkins of the hazel prominent in the hedges. Lucy Withycombe's black dress looked a trifle less sombre for these welcome signs of spring; though her heart responded but slowly to the inspiring influence that had made her father garrulous and prophetic of a happy future. If he mourned his dead wife, it might be that, accepting the inevitable in a religious spirit, he

had nevertheless felt a relief from the cessation of her restraining influence, for he had ever been the henpecked consort of an imperious and ambitious woman.

Lucy had felt the loneliness of the old house on her return from London and Sherborne. She missed David and his lute, David and his dreamy love-making; and, while she had not fully appreciated the lad's love in those Arcadian days, she now longed for it, but doubted its honesty. In this frame of mind towards him, she unconsciously nourished a certain jealousy by way of compensation for her own shortcomings; for, though she did not acknowledge it to David, or even to herself, her conscience often upbraided her for her light and frivolous conduct at Court. And now that she was to say "Good-bye," if she could only have allowed her heart free play, to disclose its true and untrammelled passion, how many a sorrowful hour she would have spared herself in days to come! In the which she might also, peradventure, have influenced the destiny of her lover; though it is hard to say how far even the certainty of her affection might have stayed him from accepting the strange destiny that awaited him.

One of the incidents of the day was the arrival at Plymouth. bag and baggage, of old Liberty Dent. He "weren't going to be left behind, with so grand an enterprise under weigh; and with the chance to sail under Sir Walter Raleigh's orders, David Yarcombe for his lieutenant, and 'dear old Sid' to join the fleet in the *St. Paul*." Not he. And so, there he was, with David's father; one to go abroad, the other to say "Farewell."

And Lady Raleigh, having in vain used all her persuasion to induce Sir Walter to forego the expedition, now that it was to sail had joined her husband's ship, to bid him "Good-bye" on his own deck and to cheer him with her prayers and good wishes. If she despaired of the venture and feared for her dear lord's safety, there was no

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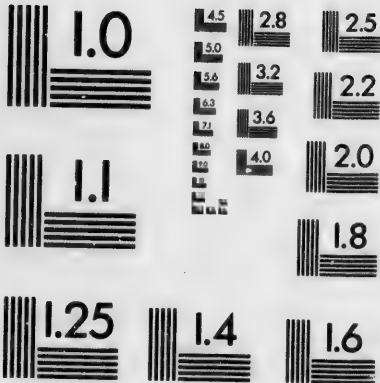
sign of this in her manner towards him or any one else on board. With her smartest gown she wore her brightest smile. Could you have seen her you might have thought that Sir Walter was giving her great pleasure in making this experimental voyage. It was not until the last glimmer of the familiar pennant had faded out of sight that she gave way to her feelings and sobbed in Lucy Withycombe's arms; David's father still gazing out to sea, and murmuring, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, "Good-bye, dear lad; I shall never see you again. Oh, good Lord, do Thou stand by me!" Before the ship's pinnace was lowered to take visitors ashore, the dear old fellow had slipped into David's hand the duplicate of a document conveying to him a certain house and lands on the coast, with copies of other papers and securities that would ensure him a further inheritance. "The originals be with my lawyer. God bless you, my lad!"

Lucy was the last to leave the vessel. Taking example from Lady Raleigh, she had not permitted herself to shed a tear. She had even ventured to rally David on his prospective conquests among the beautiful maidens beyond the seas; all of them, she understood from Liberty Dent, rejoiced in olive skins and dark melancholy eyes. Though this spirit of badinage might naturally have prompted some repartee touching Lucy's coquetries in town, David refrained from uttering a word that might cast a deeper shadow on their parting than that which clouded it by reason of Lucy's tactless effort to emulate the seemingly cheerful example of Lady Raleigh. Perhaps David was to blame for his want of insight. His love was not sufficiently masterful and confident. Once a woman has confessed her love and permitted the fond embrace, the true and courageous lover takes possession; and if he doubts, says so boldly, and defends his prize with the rights and might of capture. Lucy was high-spirited; and required high-spirited management. It was not enough that David had killed the Queen's



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The White King of Manoa

great enemy for Lucy's sake, not the Queen's ; he should have held his own stoutly in London. Above all, he should not have given Lucy the smallest cause for jealousy. Having done so, however, it would have been wise and kind to have refrained first from piquing her curiosity and then wounding her pride by references to Mary Lysons' beauty. Nor was it judicious to plant in Lucy's mind a picture of himself tended by one whom she had at once regarded as a rival. "Jealousy is the sister of love, as the devil is the brother of angels." Lucy and David both loved ; but with a difference, as we shall see.

On that February day aforesaid, Sir Walter, with his little fleet and bold companions, sailed for Guiana. David Yarcombe, having the title of lieutenant, was berthed with the commander. Liberty Dent was the master ; and Sir Walter, Admiral of the Fleet. In those days admirals and generals, great lords and valiant knights, were content with quarters and with rations that would in our time not be considered good enough for an ordinary emigrant bound for New York. Hard fare and hard work were mates when the English pioneers were laying in the foundations of the Empire.

David had become to Sir Walter almost as a son, and shared his full confidence. So the two paced the deck together, and watched the last flutterings of the scarves and ribbons on the Hoe as the fleet slipped out to sea. Liberty Dent kept an eye upon them and the shore, with something of a divided interest. He was sorry to leave behind him the fair and peaceful country, but glad to be with the great captain and the young lieutenant.

As it is chiefly with the second voyage to Guiana that this present history has to do, it will only be necessary to glance at the chief incidents of this first expedition, one of which is of prime importance in the eventful life of David Yarcombe. It may, however, be noted by the way that

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during the voyage Sir Walter discoursed with a grave particularity of the hopes and prospects of the expedition. It was not only that he desired to create a rival empire of the Spaniards' as against Mexico and Peru, but to discover competing mines of gold and silver; for he had always regarded such material wealth as the secret of their European power. Furthermore, Raleigh's colony of Virginia occupied no unimportant place in his hopes of alliance with the kings and caiques of the New World which they were about to explore and possibly to govern. Success in Guiana meant success in Virginia; providing him, as it would, with both money and influence to prosecute that far-seeing venture.

The expedition arrived at the island of Trinidad on the 22nd of March, 1595. The governor was that Don Antonio de Berreo whose dispatches Sidmouth Trevelion had intercepted. It was an equally interesting occurrence that it was at Trinidad that the preacher-mariner, Trevelion, joined Sir Walter's forces. Trevelion was in great feather, and commanded a far more disciplined crew than any of Sir Walter's ships could boast. Trevelion was furthermore enabled to inform Sir Walter that de Berreo had laid a trap for him. Sir Walter did not need to be reminded of the fact that in the preceding year de Berreo had behaved with cruel severity to his representative, Captain Whiddon. Trevelion, fanatic as he was, and hating de Berreo for that he was a Spaniard and a persecuting Papist, nevertheless was careful to be sure of his ground before he convicted him of a plot to lure Sir Walter into a condition of false security, that he might put him and his men to the sword. Once, however, the secret of de Berreo's treacherous scheme was made manifest, Trevelion agreed with his chief that it were best to anticipate the governor's plot, by an attack upon his city of San Josef, and make him prisoner.

The White King of Manoa

No time was lost in putting this resolve into action. It was an easy victory, and for certain of de Berreo's prisoners a happy one. Sir Walter liberated five Indian caiques, whom he discovered bound together in one chain. They had been treated with horrible cruelty. De Berreo's executioners had basted the bodies of the wretched princes with burning bacon, and submitted them to other terrible tortures, to enforce from them the secret hiding-place of their treasures and the locality of certain suspected gold mines. It is easy to understand that nothing could exceed the gratitude of these dusky princes, who were men of high character and nobility among their people.

Having had de Berreo conveyed to his own ship, a prisoner, Sir Walter assembled the chiefs ashore, and described his mission from the Virgin Queen of England, the powerful caique of the North, who had more leaders in her royal service than there were trees in the island of Trinidad; and who hated the Castilians, by reason of their tyranny and oppression. She had already rescued the coasts of the Northern world from Spanish dictation; and had sent him to free them also, and to defend Guiana from a Spanish invasion. He spoke to them of the deeds of Cortes in Mexico, and the Pizarros in Peru; and at the same time contrasted their selfish and cruel governments with the generous freedom and the honesty of his own. He did not, in his somewhat exaggerative language, however, attempt to slur over the reality of the English ambition to trade with the peoples and form alliances with them for the development of the natural treasures of their country; but he pointed out the advantages to them and the Guianaians in dealing with a nation that was true to its word, hated oppression, worshipped a merciful God, respected the religious beliefs and the manners and customs of other peoples, and so on. It was an address intended not only for the chiefs and their followers, but

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for Sir Walter's own men ; and as the interpreter made his points, the chiefs signified their high approval, and Sir Walter, as he spoke to the interpreter, was applauded by the English crews, Trevelion and Liberty Dent giving emphatic endorsement of the several advantages to be reaped from an alliance with the great English Queen against the remorseful tyrant of Spain and his vile emissaries.

De Berreo took his defeat with cheerful philosophy. He bowed, he said, to the fortunes of war. Sir Walter treated him with great consideration. He and Sir Walter and David had much pleasant conversation together. Captain Trevelion had twice left his ship to dine at Sir Walter's table. If he had been unable to maintain a perfectly calm and courteous demeanour on these occasions, he had nevertheless refrained from denouncing to his face the crimes of Sir Walter's prisoner. David had found the Spaniard an agreeable companion. The young lieutenant could speak a little Spanish, and sufficient Italian, of which de Berreo was a master, to make the time pass quickly. David had the privilege of being de Berreo's gaoler as long as he was detained.

Both to Sir Walter and David the captive governor related many strange things of Guiana, and spoke enviously of "Sir Raleigh's" prospects of discovering, if not capturing, the golden city of Manoa.

"First, we must find Guiana," said Sir Walter.

"A few days' journeying, and you will enter its magic borders," replied de Berreo.

"If 'tis so near, and so easy, signor," David remarked, "how is it your countrymen have not yet penetrated thither?"

"We are on the way, most honourable cabaleros," de Berreo answered, with a smile. "Would to heaven we might march hand in hand!"

"'Tis not within the bounds of the possible that Satan

and the angel Gabriel can become allies," said Trevelion, who was sitting by, smoking a pipe and contemplating his friends and the Spaniard, rather than taking part in their conversation.

"But if we converted Satan," de Berreo answered, turning the tables cleverly on Trevelion, "and marched under one flag—the sacred banner of Spain!"

"A truce to religious controversy," said Sir Walter. "This present world hath marvels enough; let us still talk of Guiana—by your leave, friend Trevelion."

"As you please," said his comrade, refilling his pipe.

"And I am thereby reminded," said de Berreo, "that the learned Spaniard, Don Rinaldo de Bouilla, hath marked down Guiana as the site of the Garden of Eden; though the Guianians, 'tis said, claim to be descended from the sun and moon. 'Tis a strange theory of de Bouilla, who was monk and warrior, philosopher and dreamer, that the garden will one day be discovered in Guiana, and within its sacred groves the Tree of Life itself."

"To the roots of which some fanatic don will lay his sacrilegious axe," remarked Trevelion, blowing a thick cloud about his head, "as the Church of Rome and Castile hath sought to despoil the Christian world of God's paradise—whose Only begotten Son they dethrone, to elevate His mother, with a court of blaspheming popes and priests, and——"

"Nay, nay, Trevelion!" protested Raleigh.

"I cry you mercy," replied Trevelion, rising and, with a formal bow to de Berreo, ordered his boat to be lowered, that he might by way of relief enjoy the perfect freedom of his own deck.

Raleigh, posted up in all that had been written of the Incas of Peru and the wealth of Mexico, that before the conquests of Cortes and the Pizarros seemed no less

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fabulous than the stories of Guiana and the golden city, questioned de Berreo upon many controversial points of the narrative of his own travels, and the reports of others that were in the archives of Castile. He may have suspected his enforced guest of a desire to flatter his researches, seeing that he pressed him closely in regard to the nature and character of the travellers whose reports he had quoted. The captive governor had strengthened his assurance of sincerity in the information he vouchsafed by presenting Sir Walter with an example of the precious metal of Guiana and the handicraftsmanship of the goldsmiths of Manoa, in an exquisitely ornamented box, said to have been used by the favourite wife of the Inca of Manoa as a receptacle for a delicious sweetmeat. It is possible, nevertheless, that in all this de Berreo may only have desired to stimulate the avarice of the Englishmen; that, undaunted by the terrible experiences in store for them, they might still push on, and eventually become victims to the climate or the savage tribes they would have to encounter; or if they returned, their forces would be so weakened that they might become a prey to the Spanish vengeance. He had, however, a charm of manner and ingenuousness of speech, and he tendered his information so much more at the desire of his interlocutors than with the aplomb of the raconteur, that it was almost impossible not to believe him.

"To you, most honourable captain and knight," said de Berreo, "'tis superfluous information that many of the cities of Guiana are rich as those of Mexico and Peru. Is it not written, and have you not sent your advance messengers to be assured of these things?"

"'Twere well not to remind me of my messengers," said Raleigh; "if 'twere only for the sake of Captain Whiddon, I might be justified in taking your head."

"I kiss your hand, and cry you mercy," de Berreo replied. "Had I been the cruel monster yonder Indians would have

you believe me, your honourable and sagacious Captain Whiddon would not have returned to make report to you, nor to seize dispatches of mine on their way to my most gracious and religious King."

"All the same," Sir Walter replied, "were I at this moment a Spaniard, and you an Englishman, I should burn you alive."

"And being an Englishman, I should only ask you the favour of an easier and less prolonged execution," de Berreo replied, with a smile.

"'Tis good for both of us, I trust, that we are of so different a breed," Raleigh answered; "though it might be in the interests of my expedition that I should consider you had made appeal for the garotte instead of the stake, and so end you. But being a Christian man, I shall sleep the better for putting you ashore, as I shall do shortly, rather than act up to the spirit of the Spanish proverb, that 'dead men do not bite.'"

"Most valiant caballero," responded de Berreo, doffing his bonnet, "I am your debtor. Permit me to kiss your hand, while I vainly endeavour to express my high appreciation of your unmeasured consideration."

Soon afterwards, at Cumana, Sir Walter sent his most engaging and self-possessed guest ashore.

"An I had the handling of him," said Trevelion, "he should have sojourned on my ship as hostage for the good behaviour of his people and security against his further treachery."

And Trevelion was in many things as wise as he was courageous.

CHAPTER II

"BUT NOW THE HAND OF FATE IS ON THE CURTAIN"

LEAVING the ships at anchor in the Gulf of Paria, the main body of the exploring party, one hundred men, commenced their river voyage for Manoa in a galley, one barge, two wherries, and a ship's boat, victualled for a month. In our day, for a trip, even on some well-known river, such a holiday-looking company would have carried tents and bedding, waterproof sheets, a perfect equipment of cooking utensils, and everything necessary to make life not only bearable, but luxurious under all circumstances. As it was, setting aside such an impossible furnishing in those days, the boats were overladen with furniture, stores, clothing, arms, ammunition, and other things necessary to the novel undertaking. But, with ever so careful a consideration for contingencies, the expedition had to undergo, apart from the perils of land and water in a barbarous country, the fatigues of heavy labour under conditions which have been amply described in historic records.

Crossing twenty miles of stormy water, they were for a time entangled in the many branches of the Orinoco; the particular branch that retains the name being, even in these days of Victoria, more or less unexplored. As for the golden city, de Berreo and the Indians said it could be reached from the point on the Orinoco belonging to the aged King Carapana; or from the more distant Morequito, where the members of one of de Berreo's expeditions,

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commander, priests, and soldiers, had been murdered with one exception, a solitary survivor, who brought back valuable information that had led to the settlement of Guayana Vieja, which was growing into a Spanish city of importance for those days and in that locality when Raleigh and his comrades passed it, unobserved either by the inhabitants or himself. In the later pages of this history it occupies a large and important space.

After many drawbacks, and the pacification of a mutiny among his men, Raleigh's Indian guide piloted them along a succession of narrow reaches of the Cano Manamo into a lovely champaign country. The expedition had fresh meat of birds and beasts. They met some canoes laden with bread. The occupants landed and ran away. Among the things they left behind was a refiner's basket, containing quicksilver, saltpetre, and divers tests for metals, and some dust of one which had been refined. Raleigh would not be tempted to remain and dig for gold. To use his own words, he "shot at another mark than present profit." On the fifteenth day the glorious peaks of Peluca and Paisapa came in view, summits of the Imataca Mountains, that divide the Orinoco from the Essequibo. At night they anchored in the great Orinoco itself.

Toparimaca, a great border prince, came down with many followers, to see the white men. They brought presents, and received gifts in return. Toparimaca led them to his town, near by, where they "caroused of his wine, till they were reasonably pleasant, for it is very strong with pepper and the juice of divers herbs and fruits digested and purged; they keep it in great earthen pots of ten or twelve gallons, very clean and sweet, and are themselves at their meetings and feasts the greatest carousers and drunkards in the world." Thence the expedition passed on, skirting the island of Assapana and coming to an anchor at Aromaia, understood to be one

of the principal entrances to the empire of Guiana. It had been ruled by a great border chief, Morequito, who had been killed by de Berreo in revenge for the murder of the Spanish expedition. He had been succeeded by Topiawari.

At Toparimaca's town there were two Guianaians. They went forward with messages to a vassal chief of King Topiawari, announcing the coming of Raleigh. Topiawari was a king, and the dead Morequito's uncle. He was one hundred and ten years old. He had walked twenty-eight miles from his town to Aromaia, which was his port. His attendants brought presents of flesh, fish, fowl, pine-apples, bread, wine, parakeets, and an armadillo. Raleigh was as gracious in receiving his visitors as he was bounteous in giving them full value for everything he received at their hands. He explained to them in the tenor of his address to the native chiefs off Trinidad that his mission to their country was to deliver them from Spanish tyranny, his chief being the Virgin Queen Elizabeth, a greater and more powerful monarch than the King of Spain.

Trevelion urged the admiral to lay stress upon the advantages of living under a Christian monarch of the English Church, and was permitted to let off one of his sermons against Papistry and other abominations. The interpreter, however, found the preacher's vocabulary somewhat difficult, and there was more courtesy than appreciation in the smiles and nods of the polite caiques and their retainers in acknowledgment of Trevelion's oratory. Liberty Dent found a keener understanding in the exhibition of certain scars of the Inquisition, which he had received in Seville as an English prisoner. This let loose their tongues in regard to the tortures, murders, and devilries of the Spaniards, wherever they had obtained a footing. David was a more or less dreamy spectator of these interviews; but he never rested in his efforts to acquire the Indian tongue. In after days his success in this direction proved

to be of great value to him, while Italian gave him the cue to another language that was the native tongue of Manoa.

It was one of the great misfortunes of his many mishaps that the diaries he had kept were eventually lost beyond all chance of discovery. Thus passed into oblivion many a tender reference to his "Lily of Devon," many a reminiscence of those halcyon days of the Exe, his evenings at Littleham, and confessions of love that could not have failed to be of lasting comfort to Lucy Withycombe, always provided that she remained true to her jealous lover. Furthermore, he had kept careful note of every day's voyage, with geological, geographical, astronomical and other observations, the exactness of which, and their fine sense of observation, gave Sir Walter great satisfaction.

The personal portions of the diary David kept to himself; as, for example, an entry such as this: "At night, under a multitude of stars that floated above us like lamps—so different from the stars Lucy and I have looked up to from the banks of the Exe that seemed to stud a curtain—I strung the lute, to whose accompaniment we had often raised our voices in the dear house at Littleham, and sung some of the old songs. I think they touched other hearts than mine, these echoes of home. I only know that my eyes were dimmed with tears, the more scorching that there was the bitterness of remorse in them. Oh, why do lovers quarrel? And why do poets laud the grief for the sunshine that follows? Does the sunshine always follow? In our case, dear heart, the cloud left a blur upon the sun, and the music was out of tune. Oh, the pity of it! the pity of it!"

"I have myself," said the King, "been a captive of the Spaniards, chained, and dragged along as if for death. I bought my freedom with a hundred plates of gold."

"You shall be avenged," said Raleigh.

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"And if 'tis gold ye seek," said the aged monarch, "ye shall fill your boats."

"'Tis rather to punish the Spaniards, your enemies, and be friends with your people and those of Guiana, than to seek to despoil you," said Raleigh.

"There was a time when my nation, and all those between the mountains beyond, were Guianaians," said the King, settling down in his seat and gazing into the distance, as if he might be preparing himself for the relation of an interesting revelation.

"If it please you to inform us of those days," said Raleigh, "you may be sure of friendly and honoured attention."

"Nay," said the monarch, his eyes fixed on vacancy, "that was long, long ago, before the memory of man, when the gracious messengers of the sun came down upon the earth, to teach the children of the great god how to live worthy, that in their deaths they might be gathered into the palaces of the Fountain of Light."

He paused for a moment and looked round enquiringly. His chiefs and retainers, and his wives and the children of his sons bowed their heads, and Raleigh begged the aged monarch to tell them of those distant days, and he did so.

"There came a mighty nation from afar off, with their caiques and their Inca of a vast stature—a multitude that could not be numbered nor resisted—sweeping over land and water, and ascending mountain ranges that touched the sky with eternal snows. They slew and rooted out as many of the ancient peoples as there are leaves on the trees, and made themselves lords of all. And when the time came that themselves and the natives that remained had become one country, with great cities, and they had taught the conquered how the better to till the soil and build them houses, and dig the gold from the mountains

and wash it from the rivers, and hammer it into ornaments, then they withdrew into their capital ; a city deep within mountain gorges, where the Inca lived and governed and worshipped the sun, of which he was the eldest born. And after so many moons, when the summer was beginning to wane, once in the year his grand officers sallied forth with swords and battle-axes of copper and steel, and in shining plates of armour, and greeted their tributary nations, and collected their tax, and held feasts and renewed alliances. And none might know the way they came, nor has any ever penetrated to the mighty capital, which is called Manoa ; though, by strange signals and sentinel lights, the forces of the Inca, in numberless battalions, can be summoned to his aid, should ever the cities outside the Manoan battlements be attacked.

"There have been revolts of some of these outer peoples, but they were always quickly subdued, their instigators hanged at their own gates, and at the same time such privileges as they had fought for granted with pomp of concession and sound of trumpets. . . . When these mighty strangers, travelling while the sun slept, as I have said, to make themselves lords over the ancient peoples who were my ancestors, the great caique of that time, expiring on the battlefield, delivered a prophecy : that there should one day come against the conquerors, from the uttermost ends of the earth, a new and more powerful race, overrunning their lands and cities as they had overrun the country of the ancient peoples of the Orinoco and its mighty branches, even to the fabled waters still farther south ; that when these days should come, there should be omens in the sky, and the eagle should succumb to the hawk, and there should be darkness of the sun at noonday, and stars should shoot through the heavens, not in multitudes, but in vast orbs, and bolts of thunder should strike their palaces. And one day an eagle,

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pursued by a brace of hawks, went screaming overhead and presently fell at the feet of the Inca, who gathered it up, maimed and bleeding, and saved its life. And he made a feast to celebrate the omen; for, if the bird had been slain, then he would have known that his empire was doomed; but his father, the sun, had manifested unto him in the omen of the eagle that, though his empire should be attacked, he should save it. . . .

"A strange people! Their women, 'tis said, are brave as the Amazon nation, and more beautiful. As a man grows old, he passes through many marvellous experiences. He of the eagle omen many seasons, long, long ago passed to his father; first, however, by his forethought, having guarded the golden city, and secured his successors against surprise, and therefore against defeat. The present Inca is an old man and sickly. One, who had sojourned in the nearest border city, assured me that while the Inca was bed-ridden, he, this Guianaiian, had seen the Inca queen carried in a seat of gold formed like a chariot of the sun. She had come forth, with her grand officers, to greet the tributary nations, who had sent their chiefs to make submission; and ever since I have not doubted the fable of the Amazon nation, where all are women, and carry spears and carouse, like my own warriors."

At which, responding to the old King's encouraging smile, the women laughed; and the men grunted their surprise and fingered their spears.

Further encouraged by Raleigh, the garrulous old King then described the golden city; not the result of personal knowledge, nor from the lips of any who had seen it, but from tradition, that had ever been busy with its wonders; and was approved by the demonstrations of its army emerging once in so many moons, and for which the King had the evidence of Guianaiians who had visited his country—two of them were still sojourning in his city. The people

wore clothes of many colours. They lived in houses built of stone, with many rooms, ornamented with pictures and statues wrought in gold and silver. In the centre of the city, and beyond, were sacred groves, and a temple dedicated to the sun. The Inca's favourite wife sat by his side, on a throne that sparkled with precious stones and gems. There were workers in gold and silver, and the king's garden employed both slaves and free men. The slaves had feasts and holidays; and it was such a city as might rival the heaven Sidmouth Trevelion had described to Topiawari, with music and harps and golden stairs. Nor did the description seem much overdone to Raleigh, who had not only followed in manuscript and type the red footsteps of Cortes through Mexico, but had quite recently mastered the newest chronicles of the traitorous capture of the Peruvian city of Cuzco by Pizarro.

"In all the world, 'tis said," remarked the King, "there is no city so rich in gold as Manoa. As you journey on, you shall presently see, by day, the peaks of her encircling mountains piercing the sky, and at night, her sentinel lamps, glowing high up against the stars."

Now, beyond this interesting information so eloquently conveyed by the grand old King (not to mention the King's offers to aid him in making overtures of alliance with Manoa, or even attempting its conquest in case of rebuff), a Spanish captain, whom Raleigh had taken prisoner with de Berreo and afterwards released with gifts, gave him an account of a silver mine on the banks of the Caroni, a few miles away from his present resting-ground, and he organised a small expedition, of five officers and thirty men, to explore it. They had further orders to push forward, if possible, to the frontier town, said to be only a few leagues from Manoa, and spy out the land, while he and a few followers marched overland to view the wonderful falls of Caroni and the plains beyond. Captain

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Sidmouth Trevelion was given command of the little company commissioned to explore the silver mines, with David Yarcombe as his lieutenant.

The weather was all that could be desired for both excursions. Trevelion selected one of the most roomy of the boats, and carried supplies of the daintiest, the offering chiefly of King Topiawari. Such primitive mining tools as they possessed, supplemented by others presented to them by the King, were carefully stowed away, not forgetting such arms as might be required in case of need; while David, at the request of Trevelion brought his lute, and, at the suggestion of Sir Walter, certain instruments of a scientific character that might be useful in the testing of metals; so that the expedition, in the speculative knowledge of those days, was well, not to say luxuriously, equipped. The boat put off in presence of the King and his Court, which included his wives and the mistresses of his officers, several of them no less beautiful and comely than the wife of the caique of the Carib nation at one of the ports at the mouth of the Orinoco, of whom, in his notes of the voyage, Raleigh had written for posterity (he lost none of his diaries), "I have seldom seen a better-favoured woman. She was of good stature, with black eyes, fat of body, of an excellent countenance and taking great pride therein. I have seen a lady in England so like her, as, but for the difference of colour, I would have sworn might be the same."

But it was left for David Yarcombe to discover the most ravishing beauties of the New World. Alas, poor Lucy Withycombe!

CHAPTER III
CONCERNING THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF
DAVID YARCOMBE

IF Manoa was a city no less beautiful than the heaven of Trevelion's imagination, the banks of the Caroni might have been those of a river running through the plains of that same Paradise. Raleigh seemed to have renewed his youth. He had hitherto been only a poor footman, but now he walked with as quick and sturdy a step as his followers. He frequently conversed with Liberty Dent upon the prospects of a great English Empire of Guiana, with a wise and benevolent government, employing the native chiefs in the highest offices of State, a mild protectorate ; armed, however, to its utmost against Spain, and with Manoa and its adjacent mines as the mighty source of its ammunition.—“No, not saltpetre, Master Dent,” he added, “not iron or steel, not arquebuses and spears and bucklers and matchlocks and cannon ; but gold, Master Dent, gold, which means all these things and more ; gold—that is the motive power of Castile, the main strength of Spain all over the world.”

The pioneers pushed on as far as the great cataract, now known as the Salto Caroni. Here they beheld the wonderful breach of waters which coursed down Caroni, and might from that mountain see the river, how it ran in three parts above twenty miles off ; and there appeared some ten or twelve waterfalls in sight, every one as high

over the other as a church turret, which fell with such fury that the rebound of waters made it seem as if it had been all covered over with a great shower of rain; and in some places they took it at the first for a smoke that had risen over some great town. Passing into the valley beyond, the country proved to be more and more beautiful. Deer crossed every path. Birds, at eventide, were singing on every tree. Cranes, and herons of white, crimson and carnation, perched in flocks by the river's side. The air was fresh, with a gentle easterly wind; and every stone lying loose in the sandy ways promised, by its complexion, either silver or gold.

The summer was almost over when they returned to the anchorage of their boats, hoping to find Trevelion and his officers and men awaiting them, with news of the silver mine and the frontier town bordering upon the golden city. Days, however, passed without tidings of their comrades—days, weeks, until the river began to swell and the lightnings of the tropical winter flashed overhead. At last when they had begun to despair and take counsel together upon the desirability of making for the ships and leaving the silver expedition to the care of King Topiawari or some other friendly chief, there reappeared part of the famished crew, Trevelion at their head, a weary, travel-worn, gaunt company, with unkempt locks, and more than one or two of them maimed and wounded. They had a disastrous story to tell, not the least melancholy part of it the disappearance of David Yarcombe and their Indian pilot.

On the way to the mines they had encountered unexpected opposition; not from the natives, but from a company of Spanish explorers, who had just overborne the Caronian miners and their guard. These Caronians were the deadly foes of the Spaniards, who had an encampment and a fortress, it seemed, a few leagues away. Now

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Yarcombe had advised retreat; but Trevelion resolved to fight. He, however, feigned to withdraw; but, instead of doing so, lay in ambush for the enemy until night. Meanwhile, David was despatched with three men to the boat, so that, after defeat or victory, their base of operations might be secure. The boat, left in charge of the pilot and three sailors, had been moored well off the banks in case of attack. Not that there was reason for fear. The natives whom they had encountered were friendly, and they had passports from King Topiawari that ensured them the help of both as guides and warriors of the local chiefs.

At night Trevelion surprised the Spaniards and defeated them, leaving three of the enemy dead and taking two prisoners, the remainder escaping. In the morning they entered the mine and found it deserted. By the side of it there were two burnt-out furnaces, and a quantity of silver bars ready for removal. They carried as many of these as they could to the river; but, alas, found no boat, nor any sign of it, nor message, nor the smallest indication of what might have become of it. Laying down their spoil, they had examined the banks of the river. One of them traced evidences of a struggle that might have been signs of an encounter between David and his men with an enemy; but Trevelion confessed that he made nothing of it. They waited three days, with little or no food, and then resolved to make their way back to Sir Walter overland.

Being already encumbered with the arms of the dead Spaniards, they had no means of carrying the bars away; so they buried them, all except one (which, with two Spanish arquebuses and a sword, they now laid at the feet of their chief in further proof of their report), and, barking a tree near by, left a message for David in case he should return. Then, full of sorrow and fearful of meeting an

enemy who might be too powerful for them, they began their journey back to the anchorage which they had only a few days before quitted in high spirits. They had encountered many perils by the way, but had never despaired, though they had eaten of no natural food during many days. With the aid of Master Trevelion's great experience, they had been able to select such roots and leaves as had kept body and soul together. So weakened had they become thereby, that they had nearly fainted under the weight of the Spanish arms and the one bar of silver. It was possible they might have found a better route, had they not been anxious to avoid the Spanish quarters. But here they were, at last, God be praised; and they hoped for the approval of their great captain, which, needless to say, they promptly obtained.

Trevelion praised the Lord that they had been enabled to give a good account of the enemy, and prayed that David and their other comrades might be safe in His merciful hands; whereupon, he and his fellows sat down to a welcome meal, over which they continued to relate their adventures by the way: how everywhere the natives had disappeared, no doubt in consequence of the advent of a Spanish force; how Trevelion had been anxious to push on lest some mishap had overtaken the boats, and also with a view to take counsel with Sir Walter for discovering their comrades—alive as he hoped; if dead, to give them Christian burial. The Trevelion section of the expedition slept soundly that night; but Raleigh made no attempt to close his eyes. He pored over maps and charts, and worked out problems, contemplating various contingencies; and then, lighting his pipe, sat and smoked, and at break of day could happily modify his plans, by reason of the arrival of the remainder of the silver expedition—all, alas, except David Yarcombe and the pilot.

Their story was more or less vague, and wholly

unsatisfactory. On their way to the river they had come upon an Indian bivouac. The natives were journeying to the city of a friendly chief. At first, they had come out against them; but the lieutenant giving them to understand that they were not Spaniards, but deadly foes to such, and exhibiting the passport of King Topiawari, the Indians welcomed them with many proofs of generous hospitality, and—contrary, they admitted, to the desire of the lieutenant—they sat down and caroused with their new-found friends.

"And their women was lovely!" said the chief mouthpiece of his fellows.

"And the wine was sweet and powerful," added another.

"So we stayed all night with the natives; and their women had teeth white as pearls, and their complexions was more copper-coloured than the women of King Topiawari," said the third.

"It was a revolt!" exclaimed Sir Walter, "a mutiny that deserved death. Your comrades were engaged with the enemy, while you were getting drunk—and worse."

"That we did not know until this minute," was the reply.

"We had only been too happy to have had our fling at the knaves, be they what they might; even the men, whose mouths and heads are in their breasts."

"And a nice meal they would have made of you," said Sir Walter.

The remainder of the story is soon told. David Yarcombe left the men at the Indian bivouac, and went aboard the boat alone. The next morning, naming one of the three sailors as his representative in command, he sent them to fetch in the mutineers. They were ordered to persuade the men to return to their duty; and, failing that, to bring them in by force. The revellers obeyed the lieutenant's orders and took leave of their entertainers, several of whom, however, accompanied them to the river. The boat had disappeared. It was the same story as the others related,

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with the addition that the Indians ran back to their bivouac and returned carrying a light canoe, in which they made an excursion down the stream, but came back without having seen or heard anything that might explain the mystery. The river had swollen considerably in the night, and the stream was running rapidly. The Indians examined the river, where the boat had been anchored and moored, and made signs that seemed to indicate their belief that crocodiles had broken the cable or overturned the boat ; at least, that was so far as the men understood them. After waiting several days—until, indeed, the Indians broke up their camp—they proceeded homewards. Thanks to the information of the Indians, and the assistance of one of them as a guide, they had been lodged and fed at an Indian village a day's journey from Aromaia, and since then had travelled through a country that, one of them said, Captain Sidmouth Trevelion would surely have described as "a land flowing with milk and honey." This delicate compliment to Captain Trevelion's biblical aptitude of quotation served, no doubt, to soften the punishment Sir Walter, after consultation with his famous comrade, deemed it right and expedient to inflict upon the mutineers, as he called them ; though their mouthpiece, with all humility, ventured to urge that the term was more severe than their offence warranted. At the same time they expressed themselves deeply in the wrong and willing to die, if need be, seeing that it might possibly be their default that had brought about the disaster to the lieutenant's boat—though they hoped, and prayed with Captain Sidmouth Trevelion, that the lieutenant would yet be met with, steering "homeward bound."

It was not without a shudder that Sir Walter had heard how the men had interpreted the signs of the Indians as to the fate of David and the pilot. Hitherto, the only disaster that had befallen the expedition was in its earliest days, when a young negro, swimming in the river Lagartos,

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was devoured by a crocodile. This fatal occurrence might have led the men to think of it in trying to clear up the mystery of the lost boat and its commander. The expedition had encountered almost every kind of river life during the voyage, and the crocodile was familiar to them on the Orinoco. Sir Walter would not permit himself to believe that David could have been lost. In his estimation his young friend was worth any twenty pilots; and, for that matter, any number of his men. His chief fear was that he might have fallen into the hands of Spaniards; and they could be worse fiends than crocodiles. His best hope was that the moorings of the boat had been broken by the sudden rise of the river, and that, becoming unmanageable, it had eventually been carried to some other point of safety. He was loth to leave the lad behind; but there was no help for it. The rainy season had now set in. They had already delayed their return journey longer than they should have done. The river was flooded. There were gusts of wind and rain. The men were continually wetted through. The ships were a hundred miles away.

With a heavy heart Raleigh set his face homeward. In spite of a raging wind, the boats glided down the Orinoco at the rate of a hundred miles a day.

Arrived, once more, at Morequito, Topiawari, the King, paid Raleigh a parting visit. Sir Walter took counsel with him and his chiefs upon the disappearance of his lieutenant, David Yarcombe, and the pilot with whom they had furnished him. They were inclined to think that, attacked by the Spaniards, the pilot and David, after an attempt to defend themselves against overwhelming numbers, had steered for a safer point of the stream. Although they had news of the increasing activity of their enemy along the Orinoco and its branches, they were surprised to hear of a fortress and bivouac near the silver

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mines on the Caroni. Another contingency occurred to the King. It was, he believed, during the last days of the summer that the grand officers of Manoa sallied forth on their mission to the outside nations. It might be possible that they had captured the lieutenant. This set up in the mind of Sir Walter strange speculations. David's accomplishments were calculated to impress cultured people such as he imagined the Manoans might be. Had fate selected him to be the discoverer of the golden city? It was strange that he had left no sign whereby his comrades might have had some clue to the mystery that now surrounded him. Topiawari smiled an amused protest against the pilot having been taken by a crocodile; but we have it on unimpeachable authority that it is the unusual and the unexpected that happens. The truth was that, in a sudden rush of the river and the floating down of a mass of timber, David's boat had been forced into the stream, anchorless and without check of any kind. The pilot, falling overboard, had almost instantly been seized by a crocodile, and went down never to rise again; and, while the King and Sir Walter were discussing every possible contingency that might account for David's position, he was afloat on the turbulent waters of one of the unknown branches of the unexplored Orinoco, drifting, he knew not whither, or to what unhappy fate—a waif among the mysterious people of a new world; fortified, however, by the innate pluck of his race and the trustful hope of a good Christian.

CHAPTER IV

HOW SIR WALTER CAME HOME TO SHEPPORNE, AND LUCY
WITHYCOMBE RETURNED TO HER NATIVE VILLAGE

IF David had been present, Sir Walter's second sojourn at Morequito would have been a most happy experience. The chief and his two principal officers, Trevelion and Liberty Dent, fairly captured the love of Topiawari and his officers. They undertook under any circumstances to send out search parties after the lieutenant. Trevelion's report of the incursion of Spaniards in the regions of the Caroni had confirmed them in their belief that the enemy contemplated an attack on their country. They evidently appreciated the Raleigh mission, which was to forestall the Spaniards. Topiawari had no fear for the bravery of his own people ; but the arms and equipment of the Spaniards, their increasing numbers, and the reports of their tremendous power excited, not a cowardly fear among them, but an honest dread. The Spaniards had already planted their outposts for the conquest of Guiana, and he would gladly assist Raleigh and his men to forestall them, more particularly in a march on Macuregnarai, a rich city, full of statues of gold, the conquest of which he would undertake if Raleigh would leave fifty men, to defend him from the vengeance of the Inca of Spain. They discussed the politics and nature of Guiana generally, and a method of obtaining access to the heart of the country. Raleigh compromised with the chief's proposal by a promise to

return in the following year. The chief entrusted one of his sons to Raleigh's care; and Raleigh left with him one Francis Sparrow, to travel in the country and describe it. Hugh Goodwin, one of the boys of the expedition, remained of his own free will, to learn the language.

Raleigh, by the aid of presents and promises of protection, obtained grants of territory and mines, and arrived at the conclusion that he had laid the basis of a magnificent addition to the fortunes of his Queen, himself, and his country. They had a rough and troublesome voyage in their boats and galleys to the ships at Curiapan, where after considering the feasibility of now sailing to Virginia to relieve the settlers there, Raleigh, under stress of weather, headed his ships for England. Being refused supplies at Cumana (where he had left de Berreo), at St. Mary's and at Rio de la Hacha, he sacked and burnt them, but took no booty; and was home again late in the year, much poorer than when he left it, but with great hopes of the future. During his absence his wife had, to the best of her abilities, looked after his interests. His enemies had also been untiring in their zeal. They had predicted that he would never come back to England; that, if he lived through his enterprise, it would be as the servant of Spain. This Spanish calumny was a curious invention.

It is terrible to think how the very opposite of a man's character and ambition may be made cause against him. Cecil led the way to doubts of the genuineness of the minerals which Raleigh had brought home from Guiana. A London alderman induced an officer of the Mint to pronounce one of the specimens worthless. He was, however, checkmated by Westwood, a well-known refiner, and Dulmore Dimoke, and Palmer, Controllers of the Mint, who pronounced it "very rich." Other calumniators reported that the minerals had been imported into Guiana. It was furthermore hinted that Raleigh had not been to

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Guiana at all, but had been all the time lying snugly in some Cornish harbour. Cecil would make no move whatever in the direction of planting Guiana. The illustrious pioneer, discredited and slandered on all hands, wrote a book in his defence, entitled *The Discovery of the large, rich and beautiful Empire of Guiana, with a Relation of the Great and Golden City of Manoa, which the Spaniards call Eldorado, and the Provinces of Emeria, Aromaia, Amapaia, and other Countries and their Rivers adjoining*. The volume went through two editions, in 1596, was translated into Latin, published in Germany and Holland, and became famous. Raleigh was outspoken in his hatred of Spain, and henceforth the intrigues against him by the Spanish agents and ambassadors were incessant; and with the aid of English enemies, bore devilish fruit at last. Any man who is looking for an antidote to his own sorrows and disappointments cannot do better than study the life and work of Sir Walter Raleigh; and any man bent on some mean act of treachery or gross breach of power would do well to pause and follow the same record, for there he shall see how posterity rights the memory of the wronged, and brands for all time the villainies and mischiefs even of the highest; King James to wit, whose pitiful history is the dark background against which Raleigh's worst faults shine as the highest virtues compared with the characteristics of Elizabeth's most mean and sordid successor.

Sir Walter's loss of David Yarcombe was, in a measure, compensated for by the birth of a son and heir. Lady Raleigh placed the child in his arms as his best welcome home. Though the Queen had refused to receive him, and had not even taken the trouble to send him a greeting, his devoted Bessie in a measure made up for much of his disappointment. . . . Lucy Withycombe had been a great comfort to Lady Raleigh, with whom she had made

her home for many months, taking a keen interest in the management of the beautiful estate of Sherborne. Lady Raleigh proved herself to be a woman not only capable of a great love, but of rare business tact and judgment, both needed in his defence against the subtle efforts of active enemies.

It seemed to Raleigh a poor return for Lucy's devotion to his wife that he should be the bearer of almost the saddest news he could have brought concerning David Yarcombe. She endeavoured to receive it with resignation; but her reflections were embittered by the recollection of her foolish treatment of him, the which had entirely belied her heart; for she loved the lad truly, and if she might never see him again, she would live a maid for his sake, and cherish a memory that was all in all to her.

"As if he could ever have believed for a moment," she said, between her sobs, with Lady Raleigh's sympathetic arm about her, "that I could have had a single thought that was not his! Oh, for the time to come back, that I could tell him so, that I could confess it, as it was in my heart and trembled on my lips when we parted by Plymouth Hoe! If the Queen would make me her chiefest lady and endow me with her choicest gems, and give me for suitors the best and bravest in the land, I would not. Dear Lady Raleigh! Sweet Bessie Throckmorton! I will hie me back to Littleham, and live the remainder of my days in memory of my happy girlhood. Oh, dearest, I do think my heart is breaking!"

"Nay, Lucy, you shall not so despond. Why, my child, you are still only a girl. 'Tis not truly Christian to mourn overmuch; and be assured, your lover lives. God has not so soon yielded up his services to the world that needs them. Walter speaks of him as his adopted son, a youth of surprising parts, brave, learned, lovable!"

"God bless Sir Walter!" murmured the girl, mopping her face, that was wet with tears and pale with her efforts to put on a spirit of resignation.

"Be cheered, dear heart!" said Bessie. "Our Walter's search parties of the friendly Indians even now may have found him, and his ship have already sailed for home."

"You are very kind to me," said Lucy. "I was ungrateful to you. Oh, but he should have known how a girl disguises her own passion, only to whet her lover's vows and protestations! Why did I not give myself to him body and soul, and never falter? My love was great and deep enough, had he only known. Oh! why did not some guiding voice of love whisper it into my heart!" And then she burst out crying afresh.

Lady Raleigh had no more gauged Lucy's capacity of love and devotion than David himself; and she was fain to catch the pathos of the girl's grief, and weep along with her burning tears of sympathy.

Presently Lucy dried her eyes, and looking up with a sad smile, said: "I will go home to my father at Littleham, and cheer his remaining days; and help to make Littleham and Exmouth the happier for my misery, and be a good and patient Christian woman."

And soon afterwards, Lucy Withycombe returned to her native village, and continued to abide there all the remainder of her days.

Book V
THE GOLDEN CITY OF MANOA

CHAPTER I

THE VOICE OF MANY WATERS

DAVID'S peril was in the ferocity of the current more than in any danger from natives or Spaniards. In mid-stream it rose above the general flow of the river. He had heard of such a phenomenon as belonging to a certain condition of the Severn, in England. It differed, however, in the fact that the Guianaian river was fresh water. His great fear was that its *dénouement* was in some mighty waterfall. He strained every nerve to keep out of the torrent.

Only being able to work with one oar, which had to be both rudder and propeller, David was continually in difficulties. His boat swung round in spite of him, and now and then fairly danced upon the stream. Once he feared he was to be the victim of a whirlpool. But he never gave up hope. When now and then he ran into broad water, free from the influence of high banks and rocky defiles, he was enabled to take a little rest and food. Happily, he had plenty of provisions as well as arms and ammunition; all the original stores indeed were intact, except the few that had been exhausted during the voyage.

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Rarely had he seen indications of human life on the banks, and they were incidents of Indian villages or encampments. Canoes had put off, as if in chase; but without coming up to him, either fearing the stream or the supernatural being they had imagined him, a canoeist who, in a strange and vast boat, skimmed the great waters as if bound head-long for the mighty falls which they knew to be ahead of him, one of the great water-defences of the golden city.

The third day of his perilous voyage saw a diversion of the waters, a meeting of rivers, and a swirling that impeded the progress of the boat. It was as if several branches of the Orinoco had assembled to discuss the question of precedence. The boat was drawn hither and thither; now backward, now forward. With the skill of a Devonshire sea-dog and the courage of his race, he faced the new difficulty with calmness and a watchful eye upon what appeared to be a rift in the rapids, that pointed to a reach of comparative quiet. He put his little vessel about, and then with an ingenious manipulation of his long sweeping oar steered for the Orinoco's gentlest ally. The calmer depths, fringing the boisterous rapids, might have been likened unto lookers-on of the battle of the rivers, that lashed themselves into foam while the under-currents stole away from the central stream. This vast body of waters, pelting on towards the mighty falls, made the great lake of Manoa inaccessible, except by secret ways guarded and protected beyond all possible discovery, even by the most cunning of explorers.

To reach those calmer depths David fought the opposing rapids. With a last despairing push, and a cry to God for help, he made the haven. Emerging from the perturbed meeting of the rivers, he found himself in what appeared to be a landlocked bay of fresh, clear water, fringed with sands that might have been the dunes of a tropic sea, rather than the shelving banks of lake or

river, so gemmed was the shore with shells and radiant weeds, the latter dotting their trailing stems with buds and flowers. This was a marvellous change from the dank and weird foliage that had hitherto margined the river's banks, interlaced with roots of trees that had put out tentacles and feelers into the stream, as if they might have been the arms of some kind of newly discovered Octopus. There had been alternating incidents of muddy creeks, and intervals of slimy haunts of the crocodile. The waters, in their mad meeting by David's haven, had scoured out the sunny backwater and overwhelmed the tropic vegetation with the debris of a rocky flood. It was thus converted into a sandy oasis.

The dunes crept up to a mighty forest, that towered to the sky like a dull curtain, embellished at intervals with bunches of fruits or flowers, the character of which was not discernible, so high they swung. Trunks of great trees sprang from an under-world of vegetation, out of which creeping plants and trailing vines climbed to festoon their upper branches. Through the yellow banks snake-like roots forced their way; not thick with slime, or elaborate with fringe of suckers, but clean and of various hues. They flecked the blue waters and the yellow sands with substance and with shadow, through whose fretted screens fishes sailed with leisurely motion.

This great backwater appeared to come to an end in a creek, the aspect of which was a sudden change from the sandy bay. It was blocked with dwarf palms and *bundurie pimpler*, swamp grass, and a kind of giant chickweed, that nevertheless afforded glimpses of taller palms and fern-like trees. The sun streamed through them, making patches of bright light upon green foliage and illuminating the face of the sleeping waters. And for the first time David saw the humming-bird. A flock of them sported about a great flowering plant. Presently he heard

a cooing that recalled the English wood-pigeon, and then his thoughts wandered homewards. Home! Should he ever again see Exmouth or Littleham, or sail his boat over the Devon rivers? Strangely beautiful this tropic creek, with its humming-birds like flying gems; but, oh, for the primrose banks of the Exe and the scented gardens of Littleham!

Beyond that reminiscent kind of cooing of the pigeon there was no sound of life, animal or human. David scanned the shore for the dreaded crocodile, or the less dangerous though formidable hippopotamus. Neither by their presence nor their slimy traces could he detect any evidence of peril from either of these amphibious monsters. He moored his boat to a thick cluster of roots, and proceeded to light a fire on the banks and another in his brazier on the vessel, and then arranged the best means of defence he could invent in case of attack, either by beast or man. He had aboard, among his arms, three muskets besides his own, several "dags" or pistols, and a small brass cannon or culverin, that fired iron balls. It is a curious coincidence, in the light of a century or more after the days of David Yarcombe, that one of the very giants of the forest near which he had moored his boat, containing the first gun ever seen in Guiana, should have been called the Cannon-ball tree (*Couroupita Ginaensis*). Its flowers, white and rose-coloured, were among the floral wonders with which the forest shut out the sky.

Having loaded his weapons and placed them handy for immediate use, David sat down to make a meal of bread and fruits and dried meat, washed down by a certain native wine of the Indians and a draught of sack, part of one of the bottles that Raleigh had contributed from his galley.

And now, down went the sun. It had been a ball of fire. It left behind a world of darkness. Presently the stars came out, to be mimicked by a million fire-flies.

They seemed to exhibit signals for the life and bustle of the tropic night to begin. A rustle of many feet, a movement in the air, the cries of birds, deep-tongued growls of beasts of prey, in protest against the blaze of David's watch-fires.

Then a thing occurred that startled him to his finger-tips; for, at least, he had deemed himself safe from Spanish soldiery. It was the booming of a cannon. The Spaniards! The cannon was only comparatively recent in the wars of Europe. The Indians knew nothing of it. The arquebuse, the musket, the "dag" even, were strange to them. Yet, what else could it be that for a moment stilled the noise of the forest and checked the vagaries of the fire-fly?

To this day, travellers in the delta of the Ganges, as well as in the more remote regions of Guiana, hear this midnight gun. They know such a thing cannot be. The white man holds his breath to listen; the native hears the voice of the Great Spirit. While David sat by his watch-fires and strained every fibre of his system to make out what the report might be, a plunge in the river of some amphibious beast set him fingering his musket and preparing his match. In a little while, however, the cries ashore were continued, the dancing wings of light again mocked the twinkling stars. For all that he could see, beyond the illuminated sky or its reflection below, he might have been afloat between heaven and earth.

At last, tired nature soothed the exile to sleep. But, while the mortal part of him was at rest, the spirit was busy, with Exmouth and Littleham, with Durham House and the Court of Elizabeth, but mostly with a certain cosy parlour, where there was singing to the accompaniment of a lute, and the firelight played lovingly upon the face and figure of a sweet and dainty Devon maiden.

And when David awoke it was morning.

CHAPTER II

DAVID DISCOVERS MANOA

NOW it was the time of the periodical descent of the chiefs and warriors of Manoa upon their outlying territory, as described to Sir Walter Raleigh and his comrades by King Topiawari.

Their vanguard had heard of a strange, if not super-human vessel, rushing down the Orinoco, a white being on board, who guided the boat with god-like ease through the torrent.

The Manoan chiefs had left the Inca, his Court, and the virgins of the sun praying their immortal god to avert the threatened catastrophe, that had been heralded, as they believed, by the darkening of the sun (for they did not, as yet, understand eclipses, except as fearsome omens), followed by other celestial portents, and by warning flights of birds.

They knew that birds and beasts saw things that were hidden from mortal eyes, and that they fled before unseen enemies. The Inca was old, and stricken with a fatal malady. His favourite daughter, Zarana Peluca, heiress to the throne by reason of his solemn decree, was too young to undertake alone the reins of government, even with such aid from wise councillors as he had ordained. Nor was there any chief in all his empire upon whom she had yet cast an eye of favour, that should, by her marriage, give strength to the dynasty and a forceful power against

sedition. For sixty years the Inca had ruled with a happy success, and in his later days had taken unto himself a wife, who had been exalted, not only to the seat by his side upon the throne, but whose mental capacity and physical beauty had won for her a position in the State never held by a woman since the earliest days of the empire, when, according to tradition, it had been governed by a heaven-sent queen, as sublime in her form and figure as she was divine in her origin. But the Manoans were a sentimental and poetic people.

The Inca's royal wife had recently died. At her obsequies evil omens had made the occasion one of intense gloom and apprehension.

Now, it had been promised by the oracles that, if ever the hand of the Inca should be weak, and the empire in danger from an enemy without, or an enemy within, the sun should send one of his own radiant offspring to assert his father's ascendancy, and answer the prayers of his people. He should appear unto them armed with power, and in the livery of the great god of day himself; yet should he be human as they. For were they not also his offspring; committed to the beautifying and government of the earth; instructed in the ages, before the memory of man, how to people and replenish it: to be their inheritance and joy so long as they worshipped at his altars with honesty of heart; meted out justice and mercy to man and beast; obeyed the king; loved each other, and mated man with woman in truth and honour, in love and harmony, tilling the soil, and defending it, if need be, with their lives; to which end they should quicken both hand and eye to the use of the bow and the spear? The beast of the field, the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the fruits of the earth, he gave unto them, to govern and use with wisdom and moderation; beasts for burdens, beasts for companionship; birds likewise, also for the grace of their

wing, the song in their throats, and the most beautiful region of the world for their dwelling-place.

And lo, when the chiefs of the Inca came down to the backwater of the Manoan branch of the mighty Orinoco and saw David, they fell down and worshipped him; for surely, they said, this is he who was to come in the white livery of the sun, godlike of face, equipped with strange things. And so he might have been, by comparison, for they were dusky with the heat of the sun in their blood; yet were they attired in garments of strange beauty: head-dresses of beaten gold, hammered and rolled as thin as linen, with aigrettes of shining plumage and pearls, sandals of fine tanned leather, shirts, or sarongs, of a textile delicate as silk, bows in their hands, sheaves of arrows at their backs, jewel-hafted knives in their belts. One troop was armed with spears. They were all men of medium stature; none so tall as David, but stalwart of limb, and of handsome, frank, and fearless countenances. But David, in his leather jerkin and embroidered vest, his linen collar turned back, showing his white throat, his conical-shaped hat with its shining buckle and defiant feather, his boots pulled up over his shapely leg as high as his thighs, his long sword in his decorated belt (for David had attired him in his best, to salute the day, and in natural expectation of visitors, hostile or otherwise), appealed to the imagination of the Inca's warriors as one ordained for the performance of miracles.

When they fell at his feet, David with protesting gestures bade them rise. He spoke to them in the Indian language of Topiawari's people. One, who came forward evidently as interpreter, answered him in the same tongue, but with a rapidity that David could not follow. The Manoan commander interposed, in his native vernacular. David answered in Italian. Then the interpreter, bending low to the chief and almost prostrating himself at the

feet of David, modulated his voice from the high screeching tones in which he had spoken the Indian tongue, and David found himself addressed in what sounded like a modification of Indian and Italian. He understood many words that were Indian, and replied again in the language of King Topiawari, but slowly, and asked the interpreter to do likewise. With a smile the native obeyed, and pronounced each word with distinctness; and David understood him and said so, to the great satisfaction of his visitors, who showed their white teeth and turned to each other to express their satisfaction. David soon discovered that the language of Manoa differed but little from the Indian, the chief difference lying in the softening of the consonants and in giving a melodious value to every vowel.

David gathered that they regarded him as the sun's imperial messenger to Guiana and Manoa; and he made them welcome to his boat. He drew it close in shore. They went aboard in detachments and examined his instruments with awe, and broke with him the bread of friendship and drank the wine of festival. They marvelled at his stores; not with the stolid *sang froid* of the Indian, but with the lively admiration of cultured men. His watch, compass, swords, and other instruments of peace and war delighted them. He made his muskets taboo to them; but he explained the character of his cannon, prompted thereto by the alarming boom of the night before. He discovered that they had never heard of Spaniards or guns, or tubes that shot lightning, or larger ones that made thunder. They knew what he meant, nevertheless, when he described to them the sound he had heard, and they bent their heads and uttered a reverential "Sabahsqdah!" from which he gathered comfort, for it seemed to him that the sound was something not unfamiliar to them, and one which they regarded with religious awe. So he resolved to fire his cannon. Running it to starboard, and directing his

guests to assemble in the stern, he lighted his match and sent the English message thundering across the waters, the round shot dancing as it went, and throwing up wreaths of spray until it plunged finally among the rapids.

Then the Manoaan chiefs and warriors knew that David was indeed the sun's immortal messenger; and they fell upon their faces, and gave him the welcome of a god.

It became necessary for David to modify their opinion of his supernatural character, seeing that they evidently expected him to steer his boat through the rapids and over the mighty cascades that were the watery frontiers of Manoa, and so enter the city.

"I have not the power you think," he said, "though I come from a far distant country, that is governed by a mighty monarch, mistress of the seas and the Queen of many ships and soldiers. Therefore, I beg that you will conduct me to your King, as one who desires the honour of being his guest."

"Thy coming has been looked for. Our King is feeble. He is old, and goeth soon to his father, the sun. Evil omens shadowed the death of his Queen. Not within the memory of man hath an enemy threatened Manoa. Sinister reports have come across the mountains. The sun did hide his face from us. Stars fell into the lake. A bolt of thunder struck the palace. The leopard fled before an enemy unseen by us. The eagle screamed, and burnt his wings in the sun. These are signs of dire misfortune. But we know not what sins we have committed. Being unworthy of punishment, we look for the succour our oracles promised us whenever Manoa should be threatened with an enemy from within or a foe from without; and we have prayed to our great good father, the creator of the world, the fount of life, the god of gods, the sun, to help us in our need; and thou art come!"

"Then let me be as a chief among you; not of god-like power, but a mortal as yourselves, for such I surely am. Expect from me no supernatural or divine power; treat me as one who will be grateful for your hospitality and seek to do honour to his Queen in your midst, having respect to the authority and person of your ruler."

"You teach us the lesson of humility, most mighty stranger," said the commander, "and we obey. 'Twere superfluous to tell your excellency how Manoa is fortified. The water-way can be no secret to one who has steered his celestial boat to its gates. Nor are its measurements unknown to you; for, if they had been made co-equal with the dimensions of your vessel, they would be of their present proportions. So shall six of us accompany your mightiness, if it may please you; while the remainder of our forces return by the mountains to report your arrival; though, perchance, you will be first to enter our city's imperial courts."

"Direct me as you will," said David; "but let us go forward forthwith."

Then the commander, stepping ashore, gave his orders to the troops. The great body of them, forming at once into twos, entered what had seemed but a gap in the forest, and speedily disappeared; leaving the commander himself, and five others, to make the voyage to Manoa with David.

"Your water-way hath a secret entrance?"

"Your excellency chooseth that we shall guide you. Such humility is in keeping with the cherished teaching of our great master, Unuwayo; who, mayhap, shall welcome your mightiness in many tongues."

Having spoken, he drew from his belt what at first sight might have been mistaken for a weapon; it was a miniature horn. He placed it to his lips. It emitted a wailing and penetrating note, which he repeated three times.

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"'Tis the signal for the guardians of the gateway," he said, answering the inquiring look of David.

"Shall we unmoor the boat?" the commander asked.

"Let me assist you," David answered; but the Manoans, bending submissively to the command of their chief, seized the ropes and chains.

As they unloosed the moorings and let the tree-roots swing in the lake, there was a sudden rush of water from the depths of the creek beyond, and with it a pair of canoes came bounding forth, as if they had been launched from the forest. In presence of the great boat and the white man standing in the midst of the Manoan warriors, their chief by his side, the two canoeists paused in wonderment. At a word of command, however, they literally flung their canoes by the side of the vessel.

David instinctively understood that the secret way to the city was behind the bush and sedges and mighty flags and trailing weeds that had seemed to be the end of the backwater in which he had moored his vessel.

The commander held a consultation with the canoeists.

"Advance-guard, or pilot," said the chief, to David, pointing to one of the canoeists, who now dropped in front of the boat; "rear-guard, or watchman, he follows, with your excellency's permission."

"Lead on," said David.

The advance-guard, or pilot, flung a rope aboard. The rear-guard made it fast to the bow. Then he dropped into his canoe, and fell astern.

The pilot began to paddle his tiny craft and tow the great boat into the creek. David at once understood that they were to navigate the weed-choked passage that embouched, no doubt, upon open waters. He thereupon took up an oar, and proceeded to assist the canoeist, punting with a will. The commander, after contemplating him for a little while, seized an oar himself, and, accepting this

new lesson in humility combined now with skill and muscular effort, imitated the white man's example. . . . The boat moved forward, into the thicket, scattering the humming-birds and parting the rustling foliage. Above their heads a group of monkeys went chattering by, and a flock of parrots screamed their protests. . . . Then a wonderful scene presented itself: a vast rocky embankment, partly reflected in a deep pool, entirely closed in with boulders and rocky heights, in the very centre of which was a mountain, its face sheer white cliff, not unlike the English limestone of Derbyshire, but reaching upwards a thousand feet without a break, then mounting skywards in ledges of rock and facing the sun in graceful peaks and towers.

Into the heart of this mighty cliff the pilot towed the boat, which was carefully steered by David, who could touch the cavern on both sides as the vessel glided beneath the natural archway. Once fairly within the portal, there flashed forth from recesses on both sides the flames of torches. With whispered words of warning and a formula of signals, a massive pair of lockgates were windlassed forth from the cavern, and the world outside Manoa, that had for a few minutes been linked with the golden city by ever so fine a thread, was once more shut out, and David Yarcombe was penetrating the mighty secret that haunted his friend and patron, Sir Walter Raleigh, even to the day of his death.

CHAPTER III

DAVID ENTERS THE GOLDEN CITY, AND KISSES THE HAND OF THE PRINCESS ZARANA PELUCA

FROM tropic heat and white sunshine to cool shades and torch-lit caverns. From the secrets of mighty forests and the wonder of flowering shrubs to the mystery of subterranean waters and sentinelled grottos. Yet is there nothing new; for, even in our day, the ancient Algerian city of Constantine stands upon such a quadrilateral plateau of rock, with sides rising sheer from a river bed more than a thousand feet, similar to the guardian of Manoa's water-gate. Beneath this city of Constantine, or, as the Arabs call it, Quemstina, there is a grotto, and a cavernous way like unto that of the subterranean water-course of Manoa, the chief difference being that the mountain and grotto of the golden city are on a vaster scale. Modern discovery has established the sober truth of many a stupendous fact that for ages had been relegated to the region of fable.

Beneath great domes of rock, into open pools, and again into narrow gorges, the boat glided onwards, a gentle stream going with it.

At intervals sentinels challenged the voyagers, sentinels who appeared with startling suddenness. . . . Now and then their passage was barred with flood-gates. These were opened on challenge of the commander's horn, that echoed weirdly through the headways, disturbing bats and other

flying creatures that brushed by with rustling wings. Then, in the bend of a jutting rock, would plash cool trickling streams, sometimes a veritable waterfall.

Half-way through the winding tunnel David thought their strange voyage had come to an end. They were, however, only checked by a more than usually formidable obstruction. As it was slowly withdrawn they came upon an excavation that proved to be the entrance to a vast chamber, furnished with divans and lighted by many lamps, the atmosphere warm with perfumes.

An official presented himself, and, obeying the commander's orders, was immediately surrounded by guards and attendants. David landed. Meats and wines, sweets and fruits were speedily set before him and his companions. The repast being concluded, heavy crystal bowls of water were brought, in which they washed their hands. An attendant then appeared, with pipes and bunches of tobacco leaves, together with a basket of cut tobacco. With the leaves the commander deftly rolled a long soft cigar; but David preferred a pipe. The bowl was of gold, lined with a white porous porcelain. The stem was a reed. The tobacco was coarsely cut. It had a fine aroma. The attendant gave David a light, bending upon his knee as he did so; for he, too, saw that the white stranger was a god.

David inhaled the golden leaf and found it of a delicious flavour, less pungent than the weed of Virginia introduced to London by Sir Walter Raleigh, and more delicate and refreshing upon the palate. With his pipe he was invited to take coffee and a sweet liqueur. David preferred the coffee. It was served in thin cups of silver, and was better than any he had yet tasted, even under the luxurious roof of Durham House. As David smoked and sipped the aromatic decoction, he was comforted with the thought that at least he was on his way to a civilised Court. He had

found little to admire among the people who had Topiawari for their king. If their food was plentiful, it was ill-cooked; and their wine was thick and overpowering. Their habits were coarse; though many of their women were beautiful.

David told the commander how tobacco had been brought to his own country by the Queen's great captain, Sir Walter Raleigh; and the commander in reply said they did not know the time when they had not grown tobacco in the plains and along the valleys of Manoa.

"You have many gardens?"

"Manoa is one great garden."

"And mines?" David asked, recalling the golden dreams of Raleigh.

"Yes, dear master," said the commander, adopting the salutation of the governor of the grotto and subway of waters, who from the first addressed David as master.

"Gold and silver?"

"Yes, my master."

"And you get pearls—from the sea?"

"We are not upon the sea; but our merchants bring them from Belestia."

"You have houses built of stone?"

"And of the woods of the forests."

"Adorned with gold?"

"With much gold and silver, dear master."

"And your textiles? The skirts and ribbons of your gallant escort?"

"Saronga," the commander replied, indicating the frock that was belted round the waist, something after the fashion of many of the English sailors; common, but more picturesque, in the islands of the Eastern seas. "It is made of the wool of the llama."

"Woven in Manoa? 'Tis as soft as a beautiful cloth they call silk in my country of England."

"'Tis woven by our women, most gracious master; and

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for the chiefs 'tis decorated by the priestesses of the sacred grove."

"The sacred grove?"

The commander answered David with reverent deference, half-believing the white god did but make these inquiries out of the graciousness of his disposition, seeing that his father, who had sent him, would surely have shown him, looking down from the courts of the sun, the city he loved so well. He nevertheless answered with such knowledge as he possessed; and his voice was rich and musical.

"The sacred grove of Manoa, my master," said the commander, "is the centre of the garden where the first man was born. He was lonely; and the sun gave him the greatest blessing of all, a wife, to be his companion and friend. They were our first parents on earth. The sacred grove and the fruits thereof belong to the virgins of the sun. They elect the priestesses of the sacred grove; who tend the sacred trees and cultivate the carpet of flowers and sweep the shores of the sacred lake."

"And the serpent?" said David, the biblical tradition naturally occurring to him.

The commander did not understand; but after awhile David learnt that the Garden of Eden, as it was cherished at Manoa, had no record or tradition of the serpent, no temptation and fall of the man or woman. It was simply the beginning of creation. And this first garden was some distance from the city. It had a sisterhood, of less severity than the virgins of the sun; and a beautiful lake, where the women of Manoa, headed by the Queen, in the moon of harvest held high festival.

"A very beautiful city, Manoa?"

"Unworthy our father's messenger, but beautiful as the hands of his poor servants can make it," replied the commander; who now, at the summons of a distant horn-call,

an echo of his own, rose and intimated his desire that the voyage should proceed. The signal announced the opening of the last gates of the journey; and it seemed that this operation was tedious, hence the break in the voyage at the governor's underground palace for the refreshment of the Inca's officers, some of whom traversed the caverns once in every twenty-four hours.

The remainder of their course was less difficult of navigation, the roofs of the various caverns and grottos higher, the water-way wider, the atmosphere warmer, the sentinels fewer, and the incidents of artificial lights less frequent.

As no picture or possible description of Venice can realise the fascinating charm of it, the mysterious loveliness of its dreamy palaces in the golden splendours of a setting sun; so nothing David had ever conceived from the descriptions of Sir Walter Raleigh, which the great Englishman had gathered from fact and fable, came up to the reality of the scene that lay before him as his boat slowly emerged upon the lake that reflects in silent beauty the palaces of Manoa, behind which, street upon street, tower upon tower, pinnacles upon pinnacles, now with palm-leaf roofs, now with roofs of beaten gold, mount the purple hills that shut in the city, terrace upon terrace of garden, vineyard, and groves of luscious fruits.

There is no rain in the regions of the golden city. Three hours after noon on every day the sun lifts a vaporous cloud from the bosom of the lake and scatters it in a cooling mist. From his long journey of the night the god of day brings to the mountains the morning dews of heaven. That the men may not suffer deterioration from want of physical exercise, nor be too dependent upon their great father, the sun, there are arid wastes beyond the boundaries of the city, which need an added moisture. That they may bring forth the fruits of the earth in their season, great irrigation works have been laboriously tended. The vast plains thus flourish

as though they were a watershed of the hills, instead of being dependent upon curious pumping stations on an arm of the lake and a system of stone and wooden conduits. Manoa mingles in its various works and life many of the most primitive appliances with some of the most advanced discoveries of civilisation.

It is deemed useful to tender this aside information while David collects his faculties to appreciate the scene, in which he is to become so important a figure. Prominent in the forefront of the Inca's palace was a vestibule, a porch of wide dimensions. It stood forth from the palace with a roof of beaten gold, fringed with mosaic of marbles and precious stones, and supported on light shafts of alabaster. The floor was of polished iron-wood and the walls of frescoed plaster. In the great hall or throne-room beyond, which was approached by a broad flight of steps, sat the Inca. By his side stood his daughter, Zarana Peuca. She was not much darker of skin than Mary Lysons, and she had all the supple grace of Lucy Withycombe.

David thought of them both as he looked upon the Princess, thought of them and sighed; thought of Lucy, and felt himself blush as he compared her with the glorious Southern figure, made manifest the more by her partial disguise in the skirt or sarong that fell in loose folds from waist to ankles, and the flowing scarf that marked the lovely contour of her neck rather than draped it. The varied hues of gold mingling with her attire gave a sunny sheen to her complexion. It was a deep olive, with the sun in it, and the warm blood of health in her veins. Her eyes were dark as nightshade, with thick silky lashes; teeth that rivalled the whitest ivory; a rounded chin, of sufficient breadth to suggest enterprise and firmness, but quite within the lines of beauty. She was a very goddess, standing by the side of her father, the aged Inca, with

his long white hair, short grey beard, and sun-tanned, copper complexion, deep, penetrating eyes, and crimson robe, girt with a jewelled-handled kris, not unlike the weapons worn by the Dyak and Malay, and suggesting the strange pedigree of an ancient race. He was bowed with years—the gnarled oak, lightning-struck, by the side of the young palm, bending with the slightest breeze; such a pair that it had fallen to few travellers to see or poets to imagine; King Topago, the Inca of Manoa, Emperor of Guiana, and his favourite daughter, Zarana Peluca.

Around them were grouped warriors and ladies of the Court. On the steps minstrels were chanting plaintive strains, accompanied by stringed instruments of varied character. It was a scene of sensuous beauty, a vision such as poets dream of; the Oriental glow of dusky complexions, set off with rich complementary colours of gorgeously dyed draperies, the full round bosoms of matronly women and the delicate grace of maidenhood swelling beneath diaphanous robes in the Arcadian innocence of a sunny clime; grave and reverend seniors in their long flowing gowns; youthful chiefs and soldiers with their warlike trappings and jewelled weapons. As a setting for this central group, there stood, ranged on each side of the palace, troops of warriors, standing at attention beneath a forest of spears; each company, of a hundred, dominated by a chief and his officers, radiant in shining gear; and at their head, Cepedia Urania, the commander-in-chief of all the Inca's forces, in a suit of fantastic form and colour: a vest of crimson, fitting tight to the body, with a broad collar of thin gold plate; over the vest something between a jerkin and a spencer, of deep blue cloth, embroidered with silver threads and ribbons; a skirt of the same colour, but of a finer texture, reaching to the ankles; his feet in sandals, shod with leather and bound with bands thinly plated with silver, and ornamented with

pearls. He wore a short knife, and the soldiers of his escort were armed with bows and arrows. The Inca gave his chief commands to young officers. They were promoted in recognition of their valour and discipline. In the matter of authority they were under his immediate eye and direction. Ceped- Urania was a young man of distinguished appearance, more than usually haughty of mien, but of an agreeable countenance; his skin smooth as satin, his eyes dark as night, his limbs well-knit; one who might well challenge attention.

But David, as his escort led him towards His Majesty, had eyes only for the vision of beauty by the King's side. The tenderness of Mary Lysons, the radiance of Lucy Withycombe, were merged in the unmatched loveliness of this marvellous figure, typical, surely, of the heavenly charm of the golden city. His heart seemed to ache, for Lucy's sake, as it beat with a strange emotion under the magic spell of Zarana Peluca's subtle beauty. He could not fail to observe how the warm colour in her olive cheeks came and went, as she leaned forward to look at him. When she held out her hand he raised it to his lips with as much formality as he could command. He feared that he had already committed a breach of etiquette in turning from the Inca to his daughter, as his intention had been to make his first salutation to the throne. The Inca rose, and, as he did so, the entire Court fell upon its face, a blare of trumpets shook the air without, and the King kissed David upon both cheeks and bade him welcome.

"Take thou thy seat upon my right hand," he said, "and this, my daughter, will seat herself upon my left; and, if it be thy gracious pleasure, so shalt thou acquaint us of thy celestial ambassadorship."

He waved the Court aside, and bade the musicians play. With the rustle of silken draperies and the tinkle of jewels,

The White King of Manoa

the ladies, statesmen, and warriors of the Court retired apart; and the minstrels, sitting about in groups below the palace vestibule, sang snatches of soft dreamy music. The troops were withdrawn, melting away as if they had been absorbed by the banks of flowers and palms and the sunny mist, that now began to spread in transparent clouds over lake and shore. Zarana Peluca, with a graceful inclination of her head, withdrew to her father's left hand, gathering her silken draperies about her glorious figure, and motioning to David that he should first be seated, obeyed her father and sat on his left hand.

Then the King (having learnt that David spoke the Indian tongue but slowly) addressed him in measured tones and simple words. A venerable prince, even in his old age his form looked strong and his carriage was regal. He was not so dark as his people, and yet much darker than Zarana Peluca; a lofty brow, hidden by a close-fitting cap of a thin tissue. His hair fell in wisps upon his shoulders, his beard was thin and white, his eyes deep-sunk in his head, his voice feeble. He was at first disappointed when David explained that he was no ambassador from the sun, but the subject of a nevertheless great and powerful queen.

"A queen!" said the Inca.

"A queen!" repeated Zarana Peluca, in a tone of glad surprise; and David responded to the music of her voice with a thrill of admiration.

The King listened to David with mixed feelings of curiosity and wonder. It might be that his great father, the sun, had chosen to give his messenger an origin he (the Inca) in his ignorance had no knowledge of; though surely he was heaven-sent—so tall, so pale, so strong, so well-equipped. His chiefs had already told him of the marvels of his wonderful cargo.

At the going down of the sun, the King arose, the

retired below music. They had and the clouds full in hand, figure, seated, ke. the asured in his regal. darker fitting on his o-sunk pointed from power-

ladies and gentlemen of the Court gathered around, and Zarana Peluca, taking David's hand, led him into the palace. The way was through tapestried and frescoed halls, one scheme of decoration succeeding another, each section in tasteful harmony.

At length, the King following with his train, the Princess retired, making a low obeisance to David, who sighed as he gazed upon her—for his thoughts would go back to Lucy, as if some inward monitor warned him of the infidelity that already burned in his heart. The King took leave of him, too, as if David was the monarch and the King his subject. Apart from his god-like attributes, this was the manner of receiving a guest at Manoa. Hitherto, no white man had set foot within the kingdom. Very rarely was even the most illustrious Indian chief from the borders received, and then under such precautions as might have been observed in the treatment of an enemy.

David found that such of his belongings as might be necessary to his personal comfort had been placed in an ante-room, adjacent to his bed-chamber, whither he was now conducted. Beyond his chamber was a bath that might have been a relic of ancient Rome. A vast marble basin, with carved seats inside and on its brim, it was fed by a slowly running stream.

Beyond the bath was an apartment furnished with great simplicity, its windows opening upon a garden. The table was already partly laid for a meal. David's guide informed him that His Majesty, the Inca, himself conceived that his guest might desire to be alone to partake of refreshment and to rest; but if, being refreshed, he would fain desire the King's company, His Majesty would be at his service and disposal. Then David asked his guide and valet at what hour the Inca himself retired.

"An hour after sundown," he answered.

"And at what time doth His Majesty rise in the morning?"

"With the sun."

"Then, if it please His Majesty," said David, "I will be ruled by his kindly and wise suggestion, and entertain myself with meditations on his gracious hospitality."

When David had taken his bath, his guide, with other assistants, dried his weary limbs and robed him in soft linen, and conducted him to the room next his bed-chamber where his evening repast was deftly served; fishes plainly cooked, roasted meats, birds stewed in wine, sweet potatoes, confections of rice and fruit, the wine not unlike a fine light sherris, tobacco-leaf rolled in soft green leaves, as is the custom in Virginia even to this day. The dinner-service a mixture of gold plate and china; the larger dishes of gold, the smaller ones and plates of a delicate white faience; the glass of varied colours, evidently blown; the table-linen white, with brocaded edges, the texture silken, as was that of all the fabrics of Manoa, the whole being woven from the wool of their one animal, the llama.

It is a common thing to liken strange occurrences to dreams; but nothing else applies so well to the condition of David's mind. He continually expected to awaken and find himself either on the Exe or still battling with the Orinoco.

One corner of his bedroom was filled with a luxurious divan. This was his bed. It had soft downy pillows. He had seen no sheets since he left the Thames; but there were robes of soft material laid ready, in case he desired to remove the light and airy gown in which his attendants had robed him. In another part of the room there were heaps of cushions; by the window two richly upholstered stools, with backs to them. The floor was boarded with a white wood. Here and there lay

a thin embroidered rug. From the ceiling hung a lamp, that emitted a faint light and evidently burnt a sweet perfume.

The moonlight was streaming in through the casement. David desired his servitor to close the shutter. He pushed back a darkened screen, of atap or palm. A light breeze stirred it and cooled the atmosphere. This was well, the servitor intimated; and with salaams, and a passing prayer that the Great Father would watch over him, the soft-footed attendant withdrew, and David pinched himself to make sure that he was not dreaming.

Arriving at the conclusion that he was very much awake, he flung himself upon the divan and passed into a dreamless sleep; to awaken long after sunrise, refreshed, and again inclined to be somewhat in doubt as to the reality of his existence.

CHAPTER IV

"LOVE! LOVE! ETERNAL ENIGMA!"

NOW David was unfaithful to Lucy. He had striven against his fate. It was decreed that he should remain in the golden city. In the first months of his exile he had expressed a desire to return to his people. It was an ancient ordinance of Manoa that, should ever a stranger, by accident, or otherwise, obtain admission within their precincts, his outgoing should be made impossible. David had convinced them that he was not a god. Wishing to leave them, a god would have done so, of his own accord, and without sanction.

Once upon a time the Inca's scouts and spies in the distant Indian countries had met with a great philosopher, who had prevailed upon a former Inca to receive him. The Manoan emissaries went forth, to bring him in at a point far beyond the mountains. Here he was blindfolded, and led through the fortified passes west of the city, being the principal gate. He journeyed many hours. When he left them, after two moons, he was conducted forth with the same secrecy. The King's doctor, a wise old man, told David this, and felicitated him upon the good fortune that attended him: a home in the garden of the world with speedy prospect of the throne of the Incas, and a partner of matchless beauty and of a noble mind.

And David found himself inclining to the destiny thus forecast. It might be, after all, an act of Providence, in

the interest of civilisation and religion, to give him power in Guiana. Not that it ever occurred to him to interfere with the belief of Manoa, which was founded on the highest principles of moral ethics; nor would he betray his hosts to the conquest of England. If it might fall to his lot to develop the best hopes of Sir Walter Raleigh into such an alliance with Guiana as should secure to his country the trade of that wonderful region, he would be prepared to make great sacrifices to such an end. Manoa possessed rich and extensive mines of gold and silver, that were successfully worked with primitive appliances. David taught the Inca's people how to increase the output tenfold, with less labour. He could teach their goldsmiths and artificers in silver nothing. They had inherited their craft from their fathers; their fathers had become experts under the teaching of their fathers, and so on, even back to the days before history was an art itself.

Beyond the advantages that might accrue from treaties of amity and commerce with England, David knew that many years could not elapse before Spain would make a mighty endeavour to repeat the glories and barbarities of Mexico and Peru in the Arcadian regions of Guiana and in the paradise of Manoa. Had not Raleigh himself learnt all he knew of Manoa from Spanish sources? Had not the very story which the Inca's doctor told him formed a chapter in the Spanish writings on Manoa, substituting, however, a later date and a Spanish don for the Indian philosopher? So David, partly inspired by what he conceived to be a great mission, and encouraged by the luring glances and tender solicitude of Zarana Peluca, made no further proposals to quit Manoa. Prompted, at first, by other views, he had shown Manoa how to build a boat like unto his own, and how to improve upon the primitive single sail with which they put their small canoes before the gentle breezes of the lake, and coasted along the cliffs

that concealed it from the outer world. Fitting his own vessel for such excursions, he had lain at the feet of the Princess, guiding both sail and rudder; and had forgotten the waters of the Exe and the Lily of Littleham. At night, however, when reminiscences of the past disturbed his brain, he would oppose his remorseful reflections with counts against Love's indictment; such as Lucy's coquetry at the Court of Elizabeth, her flirtations with Lord Essex; and flatter his feeling for Zarana Peluca by pretending to believe that Lucy did not love him.

It was not, you see, "out of sight out of mind" altogether with David; but no lover, Devonian or otherwise, had ever greater temptation to break his vows; for, in David's experience, there never lived so much beauty out of a fairy tale as the Princess Zarana Peluca was endowed withal. Many a youth, without thought of compunction, would have been moved to tender complaisance by the state and distinction of the Inca's lovely daughter, and the power and luxury that would go with her hand; even the throne of the Incas, that had fired the cupidity of Spain and inspired the ambition of Sir Walter Raleigh. But David was not one to be won by mere gold and silver and precious stones, or the power that belongs to kings. He was a poet, as well as an adventurer; found delight in things that were strange and beautiful: and Zarana Peluca was the very quintessence of all that was to be desired of god or man.

By degrees he induced himself to believe that Lucy had long since come to the conclusion that he was dead. There could be no other report of him. He had been captured by the Spaniards, and burnt; or wrecked in the torrents of the Orinoco and drowned. It would be next to impossible for him to get away from Manoa. If he did so, he might never reach Topiawari's city, let alone make his way to Trinidad. And undoubtedly he loved

Zarana Peluca. It was useless to try and make himself believe that he did not. Perhaps Lucy would marry his cousin, who would be master of the Old Farm. It was almost cowardly to permit himself to pretend to think this of his fastidious sweetheart, the Lily of Littleham. But love is sometimes cowardly. It is often also courageous, sometimes treacherous. Anyhow, it is a mysterious power that there is no controlling. David Yarcombe, it is to be feared, had not the gift of constancy as strongly implanted in him as the capacity of appreciation. So he resolved to meet his destiny, as it seemed to him, and take a bond of fate. He would be dead to England, unless some great opportunity should eventuate to awaken him. Meanwhile he would give himself to Manoa. If it should be God's will that had opened the gates of the golden city to him alone, he would, so far as Manoa was concerned, be worthy of her trust.

One day, therefore, when the Inca was celebrating a festival connected with some past event in the history of the dynasty, David said unto him: "Most excellent and gracious King, it is my desire to receive, at thy hands, what in my country they would call a decree of nationalisation; I would become a sworn subject of thy rule, a citizen of Manoa."

"Hear ye, oh, my people!" said the King. "Our heaven-sent guest and friend hath, at length, resolved to hearken unto my prayer, and grant your petitions. He asks for a decree of nationalisation. He will never leave us. He will become as one with us, mind of our mind, your brother, and your champion! I hereby ratify that wish, and at the same time knit him still closer to our royal person. I give unto him, for wife, my beloved child, Zarana Peluca; I make him my son!"

The people cried: "It is good!" And the trumpets were sounded, and the King, placing Zarana Peluca's hand

in David's, the betrothed pair kneeled at his feet, and he blessed them.

And far away, in her Devon home, sat Lucy Withycombe, knitting. To the music of her needles her thoughts travelled over the seas in search of David. Her mother and father were dead. They had left her the dear old Littleham house and its twenty acres of land, besides an income, well secured, that enabled her to live in independence and comfort.

The tablets in the church, recording the deaths of the Withycombes and some of their good deeds, had of late been supplemented with memorials of certain famous pioneers. A couple of Spanish flags, taken from the Armada, were hanging up among the rafters; and, quite recently, a new grave had been made for the remains of old Yarcombe, David's eccentric but lovable father. And the world at Exmouth and thereabouts went on its usual quiet way; the local chronicle enlarged year by year, with its records of births, marriages, and deaths.

To Lucy it was a very sad story, with one great white blank in it, that seemed to be awaiting the authentic news of David's death; for not the most optimistic ever thought of David as a living man. As for Lucy, she had arrived at that resigned state of mind when it is a woeful kind of pleasure to talk of the dead, though there were tunes and songs that tore her heart, if by any chance they should be sung or played within her hearing. She loved, nevertheless, to talk of David with those who knew him, of his many fine qualities, how none could navigate a boat so well, none had such mastery of the lute, none sang "The Hunt is Up" with such rare spirit, none had a kinder or braver heart, and, in all the Court of the great Queen, was there never a courtier with so gallant a bearing, nor did any dress in more becoming taste, or with more manliness.

If David could have seen that homely picture, the hand-

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some Devonian, the Littleham lily, knitting by the fire, and if he could have read her thoughts! She was happy, in her blessed woman's way. Fate would have done her an ill turn, indeed, had it shown her that other picture: the man she loved, wandering through gardens of flowers, or sailing over summer seas, in sweet communion with another.

CHAPTER V

DAVID SMITES THE DON BEFORE THE GATES OF MANOA

IN the meantime, inspired by Raleigh's achievements, and encouraged by the English neglect of the fortune he had prepared for them, Philip of Spain despatched troops for the conquest of Manoa. They went out in many ships, following the route that Raleigh had taken, but selecting a more favourable period of the year for their river service. Well armed and victualled, they had the advantage of de Berreo's assistance. He met them near Cumana, which place he was already rebuilding. To their great delight, he piloted them to the Spanish settlement of Guayana Vieja, which, as already mentioned, had escaped the attention of Raleigh. It had been settled and inhabited, indeed, four years before Raleigh's appearance on the Orinoco, and was now a characteristic Spanish city with its numerous officials, its ecclesiastical establishments, its churches, and its Inquisition.

The holy office began to be established here, as in the early days of New Mexico, against the minds of many of the Spaniards who had come over to colonise this first out-post of the New World on the Orinoco. The Spanish force, however, was not harassed by either the chief Inquisitor, his secretary, or the priests. They were feasted and blessed, and carried with them, as well as the Royal standard of Spain, the banners of the Church, and were accompanied by several militant ecclesiastics. They

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did not profit much in a material way by their display of the Cross, or the pious prayers of the missionaries. Wherever they landed, they found the Indians either hostile or too fearful to receive them. It had gone forth, in some unaccountable way, that the white enemy, in breastplates and with strange beasts, called horses, and with "thunder-spears," had landed in their country, and were on the warpath.

By the time they had reached the farthest border town, on the way to Manoa, their ranks were considerably thinned. Once only had they been victorious; and for a reason that seems too comic for truth, though it is amply vouched for. During a well-contested encounter with a vast body of Indians, one of the Spaniards, being hit, fell from his horse. This so astounded the primitive people, who had regarded horse and man as one animal, that, pausing both awed and astonished, they permitted the Spaniards to gain an advantage, and the white men finally entered their town and plundered it of all that was worth taking. The booty included a great deal of roughly wrought gold ornaments and drinking vessels. But nearing Manoa, they met with a foe that had no fear of horses, though their only animal was the llama.

The Spaniards, having moored their great galleys and barges safely by the river's banks, with an efficient guard, saw, at night, far away against the horizon, the winking lights of the distant city, lights that mocked the stars; and one day, marching in the direction pointed out by their guides, they met more than their match, in such a phalanx of gaily-decked warriors as no European eyes had ever yet beheld in the New World; not even the Pizarros in their battles with the Peruvians, or the soldiers of Cortez in Mexico. They came sweeping through the lower hills of a vast mountain range, battalion upon battalion; all on foot, but running with the fleetness of horses, wearing head

dresser that flashed in the sun, the tunics of their leaders braided with gems; and, foremost among them, a white man, young, alert, attended by an escort of warriors armed with muskets. This was a sight that amazed the Spaniards. They had formed into position, their arquebuses in the van, their cavalry in the rear. They were outnumbered by the Manoans, and instead of meeting the enemy in full tilt, as was their wont, they stood on the defensive and awaited attack. Thereupon, a white flag was hoisted by the white chief, signifying a desire to parley. The Spaniards gladly responded. The Manoan advanced, his little company of musketeers supporting him in case of treachery, for he did not trust the wily Spaniard. Hearing their own language spoken, for a moment they thought he was a countryman; but this flattering hope was quickly dispelled.

"Spaniards," said the white chief, "marauders, invaders of a peaceful country that owes you nothing, and against whom you can have no possible grudge, surrender yourselves prisoners of war."

A murmur of derision ran through the Spanish ranks. They were used to fight against overwhelming numbers.

"The gracious and most puissant Inca of Manoa and Emperor of Guiana will spare your lives, and send the bulk of you back to your own country, retaining your leaders as hostages for your honourable undertaking never again to attack Guiana or Manoa. Deny him, and his troops, whom I have the honour to command, will annihilate you."

The Spanish leaders laughed, the men on horseback flourished their swords and battle-axes, and the militant ecclesiastics raised aloft the banners of the Church.

"Know, most honoured but misguided chieftain," was the Spanish reply, "that we are vassals of the greatest and most powerful Prince in the world, and that we have

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come to this country to assert our Master's lawful supremacy over it. Furthermore, we are here to rescue the inhabitants from the darkness of unbelief, in which they are now wandering. Indians and Guianaians, you are worshipping an evil spirit, that will sink your souls into everlasting perdition. Through the very humblest of us, but with the highest authority, you shall receive knowledge of the Only True God, Jesus Christ, since to believe in Him is eternal life."

"Most grandiloquent general," said the white chief, "know that these people, my friends and allies, worship the god of light, yonder sun, in whose holy and radiant face you dare assert the right to enslave a great and free people, who live happy, moral and god-fearing lives, such as you, in your besotted ignorance of the True God, have never dreamed of. Nay; howl not, until ye shall have better cause. Know ye, further, gentlemen all, that I, who am the servant of the Inca of Manoa, am also a subject of the Virgin Queen of England, in comparison with whose greatness and glory your Philip is a cipher!"

For a moment the leaders of the Spanish host found it difficult to restrain their men from suddenly falling upon the white chieftain, spite of his pacific banner.

"And know ye further, gentlemen, that the chief whom I served, ere fate and, I doubt not, divine Providence called me to Manoa, is Sir Walter Raleigh, the comrade of Frobisher and Drake, the great captains who brought your boasted Armada to nought; and if ever one of you should escape this day, and be fortunate enough to reach the sea, tell them that it was David Yarcombe, a chief of the Inca of Manoa and the humble subject of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth, who made you bite the dust of Guiana!"

A yell of indignation greeted the closing remarks of the white chief. The Spaniards sounded the signal of

attack ; and, ere the main body of David's army could come up with him, he and his musketeers were engaged with the foremost ranks of the Spanish warriors. This was like the first ripple of a mighty flood, amidst the spray of which the torrent rushed upon the enemy and literally wiped him off the face of the earth. The men of Manoa bore the Spaniards down by sheer physical force and numbers. The enemy went under with cries and groans and rattle of armour, his cavalry horses dashing hither and thither, not with one only, but two or three men upon their backs ; for, at the advance of the horses, the lightly dressed natives leaped upon their necks or clambered up behind them, and slew their riders. In less than half an hour there was no leader to give a word of command, or any trumpeter to sound the signal of retreat. Dead upon the field, however, there lay twenty of the Inca's bravest soldiers, and as many wounded ; but the Spaniards numbered a hundred dead, a few wounded, and others taken prisoners. Fortunately for the guard left by the river—an ecclesiastic, who from the first moment of the onslaught saw how, despite his prayers, it was going to end—galloped off the field, and enabled the boats to get away before they could be molested. Nevertheless, not a single Spaniard of the whole company ever returned to Cumana, or the city of Guayana Vieja, to recount the disaster on the borders of Manoa, or acquaint Don Ferdinand de Berreo with the terrible attacks of other enemies and the miseries of starvation by which they eventually perished, their galleys and barges becoming the prey of the Indians below Caroni.

It would have saved much heart-break and sorrow, in London, on the Exe, and at Sherborne, if it could have been known that David Yarcombe was alive. To have had report of him, at the head of a warrior host defeating the Spaniards before Manoa, would have made Sir Walter

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Raleigh a very happy man; for, next to his own son, now a thriving youth, he loved his *protégé*, David, and, in his own secret chamber, mourned him, dead. . . . The English Captain Keymis, under the authority of Raleigh and with his capital, attempted to follow up his master's work. He found that a deserted village of the Jesuits, close to the confluence of the Caroni and the Orinoco, was occupied by de Berreo and blocked by a newly mounted battery. This settlement was called in various ways St. Thomas. Keymis had to alter his course; and eventually he returned, having done little more than to remark additional signs of treasures. In concluding an interesting narrative of his five months' voyaging, he apologised for having emptied Raleigh's purse in the prosecution of patriotic designs that were thwarted by envy and private interests.

CHAPTER VI

THE LOST PIONEER REIGNS IN MANOA, "THE GREAT WHITE KING!"

ERE the moon of harvest had waned the Inca died, and David reigned in his stead, with Zarana Peluca as his Queen ; and the sun, or the Almighty Maker of all things—whichever may be said to have watched over Manoa—gave the people rest from wars and the fears thereof.

The great city was the home of perpetual summer ; yet did the people vie with each other in beautifying and adorning it, and in extending the fruitfulness of the originally arid plains that stretched away, through a mountain pass, to the west, fortifying the country with a first line of defence as they marched onwards to the setting sun.

Their merchants, in continual procession through the mighty passes that led to the Indian countries and the tributary nations, carried gold and silver and precious stones outward, and brought back stores of goods from distant markets, delicate preserves and confections, ornamental woods, salt, Indian maize, gut for their bows, leather of many kinds for their shoes and sandals, curious panes and blocks of glass, beside pearls from the sea, and diamonds whence they knew not, some of them cut with facets that sparkled in the sun and kept their flashing brilliancy in the partial darkness of the lamplit palace ; these, and many other goods and wares, in exchange for the precious metals,

And so the years rolled on; and they were a happy people. The Inca, David, had a prospective successor in his only child, a son, who grew apace in physique and in knowledge; and, while David taught him all he knew, so did he at the same time instruct his subjects in many arts and crafts, and in such wisdom as he had learnt from men and books in his own country, and such philosophy as he had gathered from his own experience; though he had almost forgotten his own language, and Littleham had become a vague and shadowy memory.

At first he had thought of teaching his wife the English tongue; but his judgment was against it. Better forget there was any other land than Guiana, since he had cut all ties of love and brightness between him and his island home. Better live and die for Manoa, since it had pleased God to make him useful to a great and generous people, and a sword and buckler against their arch-enemy, the Spaniard. But for David's prowess and arms, under God, Castile and her tyrannical Church might already have been dictating cruel terms to the people, enslaving them body and soul, or burning them at the stake before their own altars, and sacrificing to their own idolatrous idols the virgins of the sun.

It was this latter thought that kept David busy at all times with the work of fortifying Manoa; extending the fortresses along her rocky heights, planting cannon in ambush of masked batteries, and rendering the two single approaches to the city impregnable; nor neglecting its advance into the wilderness, that opened out on its eastern side through the mountains, beyond which, to protect the toilers in the fields, vast walls were built as an outer line of defence. For David never doubted that one day, against his own countrymen or the Spaniards, Manoa would have to fight—either for her life or her liberty. If Sir Walter or his captains came against Manoa, he would

know how to meet them, treaty for treaty. If the Spaniards came, then he would know how to lead his people in a struggle of life and death. If it should please God to take him before the knell of destiny rang for Manoa, he would haply leave behind him a valiant son; who, in his turn, might have a none the less brave and stalwart successor.

And David was a blessing to the golden city. The Manoans taught him many things; he taught them more.

They knew how to play upon pipes, like the great god, Pan. He taught them the lute of Apollo.

They were wonderful bowmen. He gave them the musket.

They sang wild chants in unison. He taught them harmony.

They made the llama a beast of burden, loaded as the camel of the Egyptians. He made them wheels, and put the llama into shafts. After awhile the horses he had captured from the Spaniards increased and multiplied, and they relieved the llama of its labour, and its wool became finer and more abundant. He taught them to train and to love the horse; and he formed cavalry regiments, and, in warlike moods, half-longed for a second meeting with the foe. Man is never quite content; even the angels in heaven revolted.

They taught him the craft of the artificer in gold. He improved their method of working and assaying the precious metal.

They had scribes, who set down the chronicles of the reigns of their Incas with brushes and paint on the leaves of the palm. He cut wooden types, and taught them printing.

They knew nothing of a world beyond the seas. He taught them the history of Europe, more especially the greatness of England and the perfidy of Spain; and when they seemed lukewarm at the work of making fortresses and hauling up the guns he had taught them to cast and

equip, he told them the story of the conquest of Mexico, and the more recent overrunning of Peru.

They knew no other god than the sun. He told them of a greater God, who made the sun and the stars, and the hills and the lakes and the rivers, and every living thing; but he did not seek to convert them to his own faith. It was too hard for them to understand how God, who had only one Son, and loved Him, should send Him among men to be despised and crucified. They owned it was a beautiful fable; but, even if it were true, they urged that God would forgive them for worshipping the most superb of His creations. And David confessed to them that he believed God would receive them in His Paradise, though they only worshipped the sun which He had made, so long as they loved their neighbour as their self, were just and charitable, and obeyed the moral laws which the great Incas of old had laid down for their government.

David related unto them the story of Christ, described His sweet and gentle nature, dwelt upon His teaching, which they found not unlike the ordinations of the Incas, as expressed in their worship of the sun and the service of the vestal virgins; and he contrasted for them the Puritan faith of his old comrade, Trevelion, with the austere egoism of the Church of Spain. Christ, whom they professed to worship, practised humility of life and habit, and delivered Himself of parables of charity and love. The popes and cardinals and priesthood of the Church of Italy and Spain revelled in purple and fine linen, lived in gorgeous palaces, persecuted all who would not bow down to them, and, in the name of that very Christ whom they professed to worship, tortured men and women for believing in His humility, pinched their flesh with red-hot irons, put out their eyes, broke their limbs, and burnt them alive. When David laid stress upon these cruel examples of their brutal inconsistency, the Manoans

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would spring to their feet, and demand to be led against these scourges of the unhappy world beyond Manoa. Then David told them how this strangely inconsistent and cruel Church had elected for themselves a Christ on earth, who claimed to have all the power of God's Son in heaven, and who sought to enslave the world, temporally and spiritually, and enforce its doctrines with fire and sword; and still further insulted the God-Christ they professed to follow, by setting up His mother as a co-equal and even greater power than God's Son. And the philosophers of Manoa asked David why God slept while His true followers were being sacrificed? to which David replied that it was not for him or them to question God, any more than they questioned the sun. Might it not be, he asked, that his Great Father, as well as the sun, whom they called their Great Father, had, in keeping, a judgment upon the enemies of His Son; and might it not be that He had deigned to look down upon the community of Manoa and the people of Guiana when He had opened the gates of their city to himself, who had assisted them to defeat God's enemy and theirs, and had strengthened their arms for that struggle of the light against the darkness, of heaven against hell, which every omen they believed in pointed to as a possibility of some future day?

Then all the people fell upon their faces, and supplicated their god to be their succour in the hour of need; and, at David's intercession, they prayed to his God also; and henceforth they mingled their prayers, for he assured them that, while harm could not come of it, good might.

Yet David in his heart, while he deemed it wise, and indeed just, to indict the entire Church of Rome and Castile, entered a kind of Jesuitical exception in favour of the Lyons and the kindly priest of the Mitre House. The religion of those days was so militant, doctrine was so mixed up with politics, the cross and the sword so

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dependent the one upon the other, and fanaticism so entirely the weapon of both soldier and priest, that it was difficult to discriminate between the self-denying devotee and the wretch who, in the name of God and His blessed saints, did the work of Satan and his fallen angels.

And so the story of Manoa went on ; and none knew it, except by report, outside the mighty walls that Nature had builded round about her ; as if, in very truth, God guarded the first garden He had made at the creation of the world.

CHAPTER VII

RALEIGH SMITES THE DON AT CADIZ

UNDAUNTED by the undeserved failure of his statesman-like plans for the opening up of Guiana, unrestrained in his patriotic service to the State by the unsuccessful appeals of his friends for his restoration to Court, Raleigh still held his head high and made fearless tender of his advice to the nation. Although feeling with Keymis and his wife that his time and money had been thrown away in his Guiana expedition, Stebbing, the historian, on the contrary, says that Guiana had "rehabilitated him." His advice that England should not let herself be constrained to a defensive war by the power of the Indian gold of Spain was accepted, and once more he emerged into official prominence. He had been enabled to give warning of a fleet of sixty sail, preparing in Spain for Ireland; and quickly upon this, he had news of the imminent danger of a Spanish invasion of England from Brittany. Spain had not slept since the repulse of the Armada. She was alert, and persistent in her preparations to avenge herself upon England. Raleigh preached the necessity of rapid responsive action on the part of Elizabeth's ministers. "Expedition in a little is better than much too late," he wrote to the Council; "if we be once driven to the defensive we are lost." Concurrent disasters told in favour of his wise and chivalrous counsel. Hawkins and Drake had been unsuccessful in an expedition

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against Panama. During the month in which Raleigh was urging the State to action, Hawkins died, and two months later Drake followed his comrade; "both," Raleigh has declared, "broken-hearted from disappointment and vexation."

It was the confirmation of a Spanish league with the Earl of Tyrone that at last aroused the spirit of Elizabeth, and compelled action on the lines of offence advised by Raleigh. Ninety-six English sail were equipped, and the Dutch added twenty-four. The force consisted of fifteen thousand and five hundred sailors and soldiers, two thousand and six hundred being Dutchmen. Lord Admiral Howard and Lord Essex were joint commanders; Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Thomas Howard, Sir Francis Vere, Sir Conyers Clifford, and Sir George Carew being of their council.

The fleet sailed in the beginning of June, 1596, and on the 20th it appeared before Cadiz. Mr. Stebbing refers in detail to some contentions as to the mode of attack, which arose through a judgment being arrived at in a council of war that took place while Raleigh was intercepting runaway Spanish ships, and which Raleigh, with overmastering power, reversed. He induced Lord Essex to give up, even in the act of disembarking troops, the scheme thus previously arranged; the result being a different line of action, in which the admirals and generals of troops having acquiesced, they seconded Raleigh's plans with enthusiasm and success. Campbell and Guthrie, both writing exhaustive accounts of the action, agree substantially in their records; which, for purposes of this brief narrative, provide the most interesting data. When the fleet sailed, as far as all except the commanders were concerned, it was with sealed orders. The plan of attack advised by Raleigh, after the contention already mentioned, was first to fall upon the Spanish galleons and galleys in the port. Sir Walter, in the *Warspite*, was to lead the attack; and to be seconded by Sir George Carew in the

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Mary Rose, Sir Robert Southwell in the *Lion*, Sir Francis Vere in the *Rainbow*, Vice-Admiral Cross in the *Swiftsure*, Sir Conyers Clifford in the *Dreadnought*, and by Dudley in the *Nonpareil*, on board which sailed Sir Thomas Howard.

The Spaniards showed a bold front, and made a vigorous, if brief, defence. Right under the city walls they ranged their galleys, so as to flank the English ships as they entered. Culverins were planted, to scour the channel of the harbour. The guns of Port Philip and the curtain of the city were turned upon the assailants. In addition to the galleys, the enemy had placed artillery on board their large galleons; the whole, reaching from shore to shore, were covered by Fort Puntal, at the entrance of the harbour. But the English "bull-dogs" were of the same breed many of them the same men, who had annihilated the *Armada*. At break of day on the 22nd of June, the attack began. Raleigh, with all his native daring, fired by revengeful memories of Grenville and the *Revenge*, advanced under the combined Spanish fire. He pushed on, through the thunder and lightning of forts and ships, as if his sloop-of-war led a charmed life and he himself were invulnerable. He took the enemy's fire without returning it, even with a single gun. He bore down, straight away, upon the Spanish admiral. Sir Francis Vere and the attendant ships, however, plied the galleys so hotly that the confusion, the bloodshed, and the groans of the dying heard in the intervals of the roar of artillery, struck dismay into the Spanish forces. The steadfast and irresistible on-come of the English ships drove them to despair of their defence, and they began to give way and seek safety in flight. "Notwithstanding their almost unassailable situation," says Guthrie, the strength of their walls, the disposition of their guns, the largeness of their vessels, the superiority of their numbers,

the experience of their commanders, and the value of the prizes they had to defend, the English at once beat them, from their courage and their conduct. The hearts of the brave and the heads of the wise were equally confounded, when Raleigh, who had hitherto, with amazing intrepidity, kept up his fire, poured it all at once into two of the largest Spanish ships, the *St. Philip* and the *St. Andrew*."

Guthrie forgets to mention that these were the two ships that had overpowered Grenville, when he fought the Spanish fleet single-handed at the Azores. They were the two largest warships of the Spanish power. Raleigh had, as he confessed, determined to be "revenged for the *Revenge*, or to second her with my own life." In his attack of the twin monsters he was supported by the other ships. Each disputed with the other the post of danger. Essex anchored alongside of Raleigh. The old jealousy had for the time being died out, except in so far as it concerned the honour and glory of England. The *Warspite* was badly hit. She was nigh upon sinking, when Raleigh was rowed to Essex's ship. Raleigh told Essex, in default of the fly boats, he meant to board. "To burn or sink is the same loss, and I must endure one or the other." "I will second you, upon my honour," was the gallant reply.

Raleigh, after a quarter of an hour's conference with Essex, returned to the *Warspite*, which he at once pushed into her old place of honour, at the head of the attack, and proceeded to grapple the *St. Philip*. His companion ships followed suit. Panic-stricken, four of the great Spanish galleons slipped their anchors, and tried to run aground. The *St. Matthew* and the *St. Andrew* were captured. The *St. Philip* and the *St. Thomas* were blown up by their commanders, and a multitude of their men were burnt or drowned. The rest of the Spanish ships did their best to get out to sea, leaving the complete capture of the city an easy matter. Only seven of the English fleet were

engaged in this assault, against seventy-one of the Spanish. Raleigh was badly wounded in the leg. During the afternoon of the victory the merchants of Seville and Cadiz offered two million crowns, to save the Spanish West-India fleet, outward bound, that Raleigh had given orders to intercept. While the proposal was being considered, the Duke of Medina-Sidonia caused all those rich ships to be burnt; "and thus were the galleons, galleys, frigates, argosies, and the fleets of New Spain, royal and trading, consumed, except the *St. Matthew* and *St. Andrew*, in possession of the English."

In merchandise and plate the town was very rich. Many wealthy prisoners were given to the commanders of the land forces. For ransom, says Raleigh, "some had for their prisoners sixteen or twenty thousand, some ten thousand ducats, besides great houses of merchandise; what the generals have gotten I know least; they protest it is little; for my own part, I have gotten a lame leg and a deformed; for the rest, either I spoke too late or it was otherwise resolved. I have not been wanting in good words or exceeding kind and regardful usage; but have possession of nought but poverty and pain." It was decided not to hold Cadiz. Most of the town was destroyed and its fortifications dismantled. The army embarked on the 5th of July. A descent was made on Faro, and the library of Bishop Osorius was taken; to become, eventually, the nucleus of the Bodleian, at Oxford. Sir Walter's colleagues bore testimony to his valiant services, and his murmurs in the matter of booty were speedily stayed by the one great reward which he most desired, his restoration to Court. In the summer of the year following his service before Cadiz, the Queen received him with much graciousness, and reinstated him as Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard. Both Cecil and Essex had advocated his cause with the Queen.

CHAPTER VIII

ENVY, HATRED, AND MALICE

ONCE more powerful at Court, and in harmonious agreement with Cecil and Essex, Raleigh brought about another expedition against Spain. This was the expedition to the Azores, known as the Island Voyage; the object being to destroy the navy at Ferrol, and capture Spain's Indian treasure-ships. The Earl of Essex had the chief command. Sir Walter Raleigh was vice-admiral. The weather interfered with the original plans of action. Raleigh's ship sprung a mast. Ferrol being abandoned, the place of rendezvous was Flores. Arrived there, Raleigh received orders to follow Essex to Fayal; which island the Earl himself intended to attempt. Raleigh sailed for Fayal. Essex was not there. The people of the place began to remove their goods. Friars, nuns, and the women and the children of the town were sent away in carts. The town was well fortified, and Raleigh's ships were fired upon as they entered the roadstead. Essex did not come. The opportunities for a descent upon the island were discounted by delay. Raleigh's officers and men were for beginning the attack without Essex. Finally, Raleigh commenced operations. After a fight, in which Raleigh himself more than once had to rally his men in the van of danger, Fayal was captured, and the entire island was in Raleigh's hands.

When all was over, Essex arrived. A great outcry arose against Raleigh, on the part of Essex's officers and friends.

Essex was urged to bring Raleigh before a court-martial, for breach of discipline. Blount, Shirley, and Meyrick were his chief assailants. There were others, who went so far as to declare that Raleigh ought to be hanged. Essex called his attention to an article, that none should land any troops without the general's presence or order, on pain of death. Raleigh's answer to this was that such provision was made to captains, and not to him as a principal commander, with a right of succession to the supreme authority in default of Essex and Thomas Howard. Orders had been given for the arrest of Raleigh's officers, who had joined in the landing of troops.

Against this Raleigh protested, insisting upon bearing all responsibility himself. But for the clamour of false friends to Essex and open enemies to Raleigh, the affair might have been accommodated, leaving little or no smart behind. As it was, Essex eventually seemed to allow himself to be pacified; but the breach, thus re-opened between him and Raleigh, was never healed. On their way home, they captured Graciosa and plundered the town of Villa Franca, besides taking several Spanish treasure-ships; Sir Walter, in this latter respect, being most fortunate.

Raleigh, once again in London, was full of business. He "toiled terribly." Actively engaged in arming and provisioning western ports against the designs of Spain; maintaining the ancient tenures of the Duchy of Cornwall, which were threatened; defending certain miners from the extortions of merchants; taking part in Parliamentary debates; in consultation with the Privy Council as to the right way of dealing with Tyrone's rising in Ireland; attending, with his wife, entertainments of courtesy; conciliating the goodwill of Essex and Cecil—Raleigh had never been more actively occupied, and never, it would seem, more the object of envy, hatred, and malice. The

show of cordiality which Essex exhibited towards him was not genuine. The Queen did not mend matters by openly blaming Essex for most of the shortcomings of the Island Voyage. She aroused the old jealousy of Essex with tenfold force. Raleigh, once more a great power at Court, had much lip-service from professed friendship, but his enemies increased. He was included in the list of those Englishmen whom Tempest the Jesuit designed for destruction with poison. Sir Christopher Blount, with several servants of Essex, laid a plot to kill him.

Meanwhile, Essex, chagrined at Raleigh's power, and in despair of his own fortunes, went to Ireland, as Lord-Deputy; occupied himself chiefly with intrigues against Raleigh; wrote letters to the Queen, charging him with treason; failed in his Irish mission; returned suddenly to London; almost rudely thrust himself into the presence of the Queen; was rebuffed; and finally revolted, and tried to raise the Londoners, going through the city on a Sunday with a naked sword, followed by Southampton and other malcontents. Essex, indeed, seems to have behaved like a madman; and Raleigh suggests that his insurrection might not have cost him his head, had it not been for the vulgar taunt which he had uttered against Elizabeth, that "her conditions were as crooked as her carcase."

The treason of Essex involved Sir Christopher Blount, Sir Charles Danvers, Sir Gilly Meyrick, and his secretary, Mr. Henry Cuff, and several others of their accomplices. They paid the sacrifice of their lives on the block. In regard to the charges which they had made against Raleigh, Blount begged his pardon, and confessed the wrong he had done him in the spread of reports abroad to inflame the populace against him. Nevertheless, Raleigh had lost much of the esteem of the people. The fall of Essex, who had always been a favourite, still further discounted Raleigh's reputation. Many reports to his disadvantage

continued to be circulated. Cecil hindered his advancement. But for him, he would have been a Privy Councillor. Cecil professed to be not unwilling to see this promotion, if Raleigh would resign the Captaincy of the Guard to Sir George Carew. Raleigh would not make that sacrifice, preferring to continue plain Sir Walter Raleigh, knight. The Queen, however, conferred other honours upon him, including the Governorship of Jersey; but he was disappointed of his ambitions in many respects, and may be said to have sulked more or less at Sherborne; where, however, he was very content in the society of his wife and his son and heir.

He engaged himself in fresh efforts to utilise his Guianan discoveries. Trevelion undertook a voyage of further investigation in regard to Manoa and the Spanish movements against Guiana; one of the chief objects of the sturdy old mariner being to make sure of the fate of David Yarcombe. Dent accompanied his old comrade; and, in a fight with a Spanish ship of vastly superior calibre, lost his life. He was rescued, however, from immediate death at the hands of the don, and died peacefully on board the *St. Paul*, and was buried at sea, with prayers and the solemn music of the ship's company of instrumentalists, Trevelion lifting up his voice and praising the Lord. They had Spanish prisoners on board, who marvelled at the religious services of the heretic Lutherans, whom they had always understood to be barbarians of the worst type, believing in the devil, and indulging in a filthy kind of worship worse than the idolatry of savages. . . . Trevelion still went on beating about the seas; now in company with a Raleigh expedition, now on his own account with partners in other ships of adventure; always praying for the return of David Yarcombe, never believing in his death, yet never receiving an answer to his prayers.

CHAPTER IX

RALEIGH STILL DREAMS OF MANOA

QUEEN ELIZABETH was a disingenuous friend to Sir Walter Raleigh; but King James hated him from the first. With the death of the Queen fell her devoted minister and her most famous champion. Being introduced to the Scottish King, the great Queen's successor received him with a pun upon his name.

"By my soul, man," he said, "I have heard but rawly of thee!"

Later when James boasted that he could have won the succession by force, Raleigh exclaimed: "Would God that had been put to the trial!"

"Why?" asked the King.

"Because," said Raleigh, "your Majesty would then have known your friends from your foes!"

James was too narrow ever to forgive this oracular repartee.

Unfortunately for his popularity, Raleigh had the faculty of exciting animosity in dull, ungenerous natures. Jealousy, as well as fear, no doubt operated to Raleigh's disadvantage in the weak and narrow soul of James. Forthwith he began to cut off Raleigh's income, and to shear him of his offices. In his stead Sir Thomas Erskine was appointed Captain of the Guard. He was ejected from Durham House. He bore his reverses with patience. He tried to conciliate the King. Diplomacy was busy in the direction of a peace

with Spain. Negotiations, begun in Elizabeth's time, were renewed, with proposals of conditions that accentuated the opposition of Raleigh and his injudicious friend, Cobham. France feared an Anglo-Spanish alliance. The conduct of James gave colour to the possibility of such an arrangement. Raleigh was not only dead against any accommodation with Spain, but he pressed upon the King the idea of signalling his succession in feats of arms against Philip. James had altogether opposite views, and Raleigh failed to gauge his idiosyncrasies. Presently, there were plots afoot against the King; "plot and plot within plot," in which sundry discontented noblemen and one or two priests were concerned. The intrigue, "a dark kind of treason," as Rushworth calls it, "a sham plot," as it is styled by Sir John Hawles, belongs to our story only so far as the cross machinations involved Raleigh. "His slender relation to it is as hard to fix as a cobweb or a nightmare."

Nevertheless, Raleigh's enemies succeeded in bringing him to trial for treason, in connection with Cobham's intercourse with the Duke of Aremberg, a Flemish nobleman in the King of Spain's service. In the reign of Elizabeth, Cobham, with the authority of the Privy Council, had had official interviews with him; and it was natural enough, now that the Duke came to England under James as the Spanish ambassador, with a pacific mission, that he and Cobham should renew their acquaintanceship. Cobham, desiring to advance the cause of the ambassador and presuming upon his intimacy with Raleigh, was foolish and indiscreet enough, entirely on his own account and without consultation with his friend, to suggest that a sum of money should be paid to Raleigh, to secure his interest in the cause of a policy of peace. While Cobham was on close terms with the Spanish ambassador, a plot was being hatched to overthrow the dynasty of James. Cobham was intimate with the conspirators, without being acquainted

with their designs. His knowledge of the men was, however, sufficient to excite suspicion against him; and Raleigh's friendship with Cobham was the cue for the hostile inventions of his enemies. Raleigh was not only unfortunate enough to be hated of James but he had made enemies of Cecil and Howard. His unscrupulous opponents deemed the occasion favourable to his ruin. He was charged with complicity in the plot to depose the King. The only shadow of a thought against him was in Cobham's ridiculous proposal that the Spanish ambassador should buy him over to help on the scheme of a treaty of peace between England and Spain. This was distorted into an accusation that Raleigh was willing to become a Spanish spy. In default of any kind of evidence against him, one Dyer was called to prove that he heard a gentleman in Lisbon say that Don Raleigh and Don Cobham would cut the King's throat before his coronation.

The trial was conducted in a brutal spirit of antagonism to the illustrious prisoner. The language of the prosecuting Attorney-General, Coke, was vulgarly vituperative. No wonder that a certain odium still clings to the fame of both Bench and Bar, when history gives us so many instances of the shameless time-serving of both the one and the other. In our day one loves to think that the Bench, at least, is above suspicion; but the Bar is by no means free of a bullying brutality that has been the object of attack and denunciation at the hands of many of the most famous of English authors and publicists. Coke was a fine example of what is possible under Court influence, unchecked by public opinion. He called Raleigh "a damnable atheist," "a spider of hell," and "a viperous traitor." Raleigh was promptly found guilty, and sentenced to death. He was conveyed from Winchester to the Tower; and, although not immediately brought to execution, daily expected his death.

"You shall receive, my dear wife," he wrote to his loving companion, "my last words in these my last lines. My love I send you that you may keep it when I am dead; and my counsel that you may remember it when I am no more. I would not with my will present you sorrows; dear Bess, let them go to the grave with me and be buried in the dust. And seeing that it is not the will of God that I should see you any more, bear my destruction patiently and with a heart like yourself. First, I send you all the thanks which my heart can conceive or my words express for your many travails and care for me; which though they have not taken effect as you wished, yet my debt to you is not less; but pay it I never shall in this world." Then he begs her not to mourn for him "that am but dust"; and gives her much advice, as to their son and the property he bequeaths to her. "I cannot write much," he concludes, "God knows how hardly I steal this time when all sleep; and it is also time for me to separate my thoughts from the world. Beg my dead body, which living was denied you, and either lay it in Sherborne or in Exeter church by my father and mother. I can say no more; time and death call me away. The everlasting God, powerful, infinite, and inscrutable God Almighty, who is goodness itself, the true light and life, keep you and yours; and have mercy upon me, and forgive my persecutors and accusers, and send us to meet in His glorious kingdom. My dear wife, farewell. Bless my boy, pray for me, and let my true God hold you both in His arms."

Raleigh felt that he had little to expect from his persecutors, now that his life was forfeit. But James did not venture at that time to carry out the extreme penalty that had been pronounced upon him. He held the axe over his victim's head with a feline instinct of torture. Hoping to obtain some inculcating evidence from the last confessions of other condemned men, he had them led to

the block, reprieving some of them at the last moment. He caused Raleigh to see, from his window, more than one of these tragedy-farces. At length, the eternal spring of hope welled up in the hearts of Raleigh and his wife, and the great public were glad of the stay of execution. The more the world got to know of the charges against Raleigh and to consider them, the more his innocence was established in public opinion; and the more his absence from public life was noted, the more seriously was he missed from its national enterprise and maritime *éclat*.

It is difficult to credit James with any other feeling than that of personal advantage; but, for the time being, he must have the benefit of a doubt as to such credit of human feeling and remorse as his advocates may invent for him. He not only did not carry out the sentence against Raleigh, but he permitted his prisoner many indulgences. While he confiscated his estates, and handed them over to Carr, afterwards Earl of Somerset, he gave Lady Raleigh eight thousand pounds, for herself and children, as purchase money of Sir Walter's life interest; he permitted her to retain some goods and chattels; and, above all, in the estimation of husband and wife, the King granted Lady Raleigh's petition that she might be a prisoner with her husband, and share his confinement. They were comfortably lodged—Sir Walter, Lady Raleigh, and their son; but it took most of the little income they had left to pay their expenses in the Tower. Raleigh spent much time in drawing up petitions and formulating schemes, by way of securing some certain portion for his wife and children. His wife, during an epidemic of malaria in the prison, went to Sherborne, while its destiny was still uncertain; and, returning to the Tower, brought another inmate in their second son. The child was christened Carew, the first-born being named Walter.

Time ran on, even in the Tower. Raleigh commenced

his "History of the World," and wrote some touching poems and several essays of a political and miscellaneous character. Queen Anne accompanied her unfortunate eldest son on a visit to Raleigh in his confinement. Both the Queen and her son took a fancy to the illustrious prisoner; and, encouraged by Her Majesty, Raleigh asked Lord Salisbury for permission to go to Guiana, on an expedition for gold. He offered, lest it should be thought he was a "runagate," to leave his wife and sons as hostages; and furthermore, he said, the Queen and Salisbury might have all the treasure he should bring back. He pleaded unavailingly, and, instead of enlargement, his Tower privileges were diminished. Lady Raleigh had offended the lieutenant of the Tower by driving thither in her coach. She was admonished to do so no more. It was ordered that, at five o'clock each evening, Raleigh and his servants should retire to their separate apartments, and that guests should not be admitted any more in an evening. This sent Lady Raleigh to her own house.

To this enforced loneliness, the world is no doubt indebted for much of Sir Walter's literary work. Strange to say, in spite of the very remotest possibility of his release, he not only persisted in looking for it, but in dreams of another expedition to Guiana and the discovery of Manoa. He was none the less energetic in his plans for the future of Virginia, which were destined to bear noble results for posterity. He must, many a time, have regretted that, on his first voyage to Guiana, he did not make more of his material advantages and less of his preparations for a future alliance with the Indians. He always looked too far ahead. His horizon was too wide for appreciation by the less far-seeing ministers and mariners with whom he had to count. He might easily have brought home from his first voyage valuable examples of the gold and silver of the country; but he chose to prepare the

way for a far greater harvest than that of the mere working of a gold mine. Now, however, weighted with many years of imprisonment, he was willing to put forward the advantages of an expedition to Guiana upon sordid grounds; though, still permitting his ambition in that direction to be influenced by those dreams of a new empire for England over which he had burnt the midnight oil in his tower-room of Durham House, when his star was in its ascendency.

CHAPTER X

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

"**W**HAT fates impose, that man must needs abide." Two prisoners! Sir Walter Raleigh, languishing in the Tower, held by bolts and bars and sentinels; David Yarcombe, in the city of Sir Walter's brightest dreams, held by the silken bonds of love and the iron chains of honour.

If Sir Walter could only have called David as a witness of the truth of Guiana, he might have been sailing to the golden land backed by the power of the State. One of Sir Walter's sympathetic biographers, Mr. Gosse, meditates upon the might-have-beens in the illustrious Englishman's career. How easy it is to look back and see the dangers and difficulties of the road that has been passed, and mark the finger-posts pointing to the rosy way of the future that might have been traversed, had not the pilgrim mistaken for it the fateful path of disaster!

David Yarcombe might have been the happiest prince in the world, but for looking back upon the way he had come. In these retrospects he exaggerated the pleasures of the road, and allowed the rough passages to merge into the smoother ways. He had once endeavoured to take his wife into his confidence as touching Littleham and Lucy; but, if Lucy was jealous, Zarana Peluca was insanely bitten. David could see that if he would keep in the rosy path of contented love, Littleham and Lucy must belong to memories that were locked in his own bosom. Zarana

Peluca could not endure the thought that there was queen or princess, village maiden or any other, before herself in David's affections. It was not forbidden for a Manoan chief to have several wives. The Inca might have had a palace full of them. Zarana Peluca would not have minded if David had followed the example of other Incas in this respect, so long as she remained queen of his heart, as she was Queen upon the throne. But to think that there had been a white queen in his affections, and that his thoughts went back to her and his own country, would have been torture to her.

So David tried all the more to forget Lucy, though she would come to him in his dreams. Nor was Mary Lysons entirely forgotten. He imagined her a holy nun in the French convent she had told him of. It was not strange that he, or any freeborn Englishman, should hate the Papists; and yet he could only think of Mary Lysons as a saint, and of the mysterious but sweet and holy house by Paul's Walk as a shrine of pure religion. He had given Mary Lysons' ring to his wife; not to the English wife Mary had in her mind, but to a pagan, whom the tenets of her severe co-religionists looked upon as a lost soul, one to be gathered within the folds of the Church, or, failing conversion, to be burnt for having the misfortune to be born without a knowledge of the Faith. Yet were there not wanting, in those days of religious intolerance and tyranny, priests who lived sweet and holy lives, carrying the torch of civilisation into dark corners of the world; though it fell to the lot even of some of these to become victims themselves to the system they upheld, charged with—— But that opens up a line of country it is not our business to travel; and besides, the sun is shining at Manoa, and the Inca David and the young prince, his son Walter, are teaching the King's grooms to break in a string of young colts.

The White King of Manoa

Nothing that David had done had astounded the natives more than his introduction of the horse. It was indeed a god-send that, in his defeat of the Spaniards, he had been able to capture such of their animals as had not fallen, lamed or killed, before the bows and spears of the Manoan army. This addition to the economic system of the city, following David's introduction of wheels, had led to road-making. Within ten years a highway had been built across the vast plains, outside the first and second lines of defence, even so far as Barrati, a city thirty odd leagues away, which was governed by an Indian king, and was now opened up to commerce with Manoa. Barrati was situated on a broad river, that eventually joined the Orinoco and thence reached the sea on the opposite coast; and was destined at some future day to become, no doubt, a port of European trade. David had conducted an expedition to Barrati and entered into an alliance therewith. He warned the King to construct defences along his line of river; though David's fears of attack were not from that direction. It had been quite sufficient proof of what the Spaniards could do, in penetrating the heart of the country, that they had already been at the very gates of Manoa. It must have been by God's providence that he had arrived before them, to lead the children of the sun against the invaders. One of his greatest pleasures was to ride, with his son, through the fortified way with a picked company of troops, and survey the country beyond, and to encamp at the point where he had met the Manoan chiefs in those days of long ago.

At this point he had erected a tall monolith of stone, the plinth of a white marble that was quarried near Manoa, an inlaid plate of gold being inscribed:

"IN HONOUR OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

ERECTED BY DAVID YARCOMBE,

THE WHITE KING OF MANOA,

In the Year 1610."

Poor Sir Walter ! Not the wildest dream that had ever kept him burning the midnight oil at Durham House had ever encompassed so great a romance as this.

If he loved Prince Henry, James's unhappy son, how he would have loved Prince Walter, the bright-eyed son of David Yarcombe ! As David's son grew to a companionable age, so did Sir Walter's ; but young Raleigh only once or twice saw his father, and then as a prisoner ; and so cruel was Fate, that the young Prince Henry died while yet he might have been of service, both to Sir Walter and the kingdom.

Before the young Prince passed away, however, he had obtained a promise from his father that Raleigh should be released at Christmas, 1612 ; but the Prince had been dead six weeks when the happy time of Christmas came, and the King forgot his promise. It was not until four years later, and after he had been a prisoner nearly thirteen years, that his two worst enemies, Somerset and Northumberland, being succeeded by Winwood and Villiers, his desires were listened to by the King, aided by such influence as was possessed by the Queen ; and in the month of March, 1616, His Majesty signed the warrant of his release from the Tower. The conditions were onerous. He was to live in his own house, with a keeper ; he was not to visit the Court, or to be seen at any public assembly, but to occupy his whole time in preparations for his voyage. He took a house in Broad Street ; and lived there, with his wife and sons, in close retirement for fourteen months. He invested all he had left of his confiscated wealth in the expedition ; £8,000 and interest from the Sherborne estate, £2,500 which Lady Raleigh raised from the sale of some land of her own, £5,000 that Raleigh borrowed, chiefly of a merchant of Amsterdam ; and £15,000 was contributed by friends.

During fourteen months Raleigh thus got six or eight

ships together in the Thames. They and he were watched jealously by Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, and his spies. Everything that transpired was made known to Philip. Gondomar was familiar with the poor ambitions and purposes of James. He had been in his confidence for four or five years. Gondomar professed to believe that Raleigh's expedition was intended to attack the Mexican plate-fleet, and otherwise prey upon Spain. The objects of the expedition were, therefore, defined by Royal decree, and it was forbidden that Raleigh should visit the dominions of any Christian prince. Gondomar obtained copies of certain documents that Raleigh had drawn up for the King's private information, describing his intended route, and these were sent to Madrid, with every other scrap of information Gondomar could collect. Spain thereupon offered to provide Raleigh with an escort to the gold mine which was the chief object of his voyage. The proposition was declined by Raleigh. He continued, in very explicit terms, to assert that he had no piratical intention, and that any man might peacefully enter Guiana without asking leave of Spain. After many intrigues to move Raleigh's fleet to other purposes, implicit undertakings were given to Philip that the expedition should in no way be injurious to Spain. Finally, Raleigh's ships sailed, the crews a nondescript company; with the exception, indeed, of some forty gentlemen, the scum of London and the Thames. Raleigh was Admiral; his son, Walter, captain of the *Destiny*, Sir William Sentleger on the *Thunderer*, the other ships no less notably commanded, and Trevelion, the preacher-mariner, on the *Jason*, his own vessel, the *St. Paul*, having gone down in a tempest off the Azores; he and his crew, "by the mercy of the Lord," as he delighted to declare, being "miraculously saved" by an English ship-of-war, in the service of which they were enabled to assist at the defeat and capture of

a brace of Spaniards, "with ten English prisoners on board, destined, no doubt, to torture and death, said Spaniards having sunk a merchantman and taken half her crew."

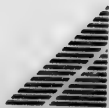
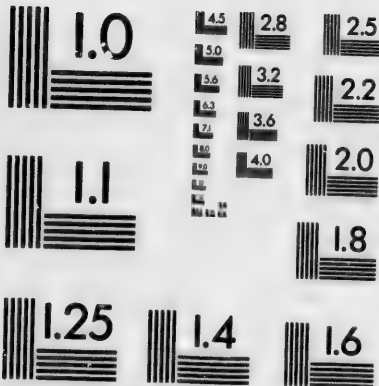
It was an unhappy voyage. One of the ships deserted in the night, off Lanzarote. It turned out to have been in the pay of the Spanish ambassador. Raleigh had difficulties at Lanzarote. They were, however, peacefully got over. But the deserter sailed for England, and falsely reported that Raleigh had attacked a Spanish island. Lest the present narrator should be deemed of special partiality in these records of the last voyage of Raleigh, he ventures to quote the words of an independent historian: "As the great Englishman went sailing westward through the lustrous waters of the Canary archipelago his doom was sealed, and he would have felt his execution to be a certainty had he but known what was happening in England."

Only one really pleasant experience illuminated the darkness of this unfortunate voyage. It occurred in the port of Gomera; "the best," Raleigh wrote to his wife, "in all the Canaries, the town and castle standing on the very breach of the sea; but the billows do so tumble and overfall that it is impossible to land upon any part of the strand but by swimming, saving in a cove under steep rocks where they can pass towards the town but one after the other." Mistaken for Algerian pirates, they were fired upon by the garrison; but Raleigh managed to send a messenger on shore, telling them he only wanted water, and it turned out that the Governor knew who his visitors were, and gave them a hearty welcome. The Governor's wife's mother had been a Stafford lady, and, as soon as he knew that, Sir Walter sent his countrywoman a present of half a dozen embroidered handkerchiefs and as many pairs of gloves. To this the lady



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responded with four great loaves of sugar, and many baskets of lemons, oranges, pomegranates, figs, and grapes, regretting that the barren island did not afford anything else worthy of his acceptance. During the three days the fleet rode at anchor off the island, the Governor and his wife wrote to Raleigh every day, while the sailors went to and fro and drew forty pipes of water.

Soon after they set sail from the Canaries the provost-marshal of the fleet, one Stead, died; and much sickness followed. They left the Thames in March. By the middle of November they anchored at the mouth of the Cayenne river, Raleigh himself very ill. He recovered, however, after a short time ashore; and was greatly cheered, after a day or two, by the most unexpected appearance of his old servant, Heny Sparrow, who had almost forgotten his own language. In the Indian tongue, he encouraged Raleigh tremendously, with reports of Guiana which he had from a Spaniard, who, in the disguise of an Indian, had penetrated as far as the very gates of Manoa. The Spaniard had, ten years previously, been taken prisoner, by one of the chiefs in King Topiawari's country, but had managed to escape to a more friendly village. Here he had adopted the Indian faith and manners; and being naturally of a very dark skin, had, by staining his face and learning the language, been able to travel to the confines of the Guianaian boundaries; where, however, he had narrowly escaped capture by the great White King of Manoa.

"Manoa!" exclaimed Raleigh. "The great White King! Come hither, Trevelion, old friend. Say that again, my lad."

"He told me that, disguised as an Indian, he had got as far as the very gates of the golden city of Manoa; that it was defended by inaccessible mountain passes and forts; that it was governed by a white king, who

had come down straight from the sun, and on the death of the Inca had succeeded him and married his favourite daughter; that he had taught them the use of muskets and the culverin, had introduced and bred there the Spanish war-horse, and was called by the Indians in the tributary territories of Manoa the great White King."

"A Spaniard, of course?" said Raleigh.

"No. He was himself a Spaniard who told me the story; but the great White King, he said, was no Spaniard, but a god, taller than any chief in Guiana and of a shining countenance. The Indians had seen him often, for he rode over the land many leagues outside the city, with a brave army of chiefs and soldiers, his youthful son by his side, and on one occasion his wife, a beautiful Manoa, of an olive complexion, and they looked like a king and queen of fairy-land. The Spaniard, who had got so far by the aid of his Indian tongue and disguise, made no doubt that, by witchcraft or magic, Manoa would defy the greatest force Spain could bring against it; and that the King and Queen, of a mighty and royal descent, might well be called children of the sun."

"One of those fables," said Trevelion, "begot of the devil, to lead to our undoing. That thief, de Berreo, who did dazzle your eyes with statues of gold and mountains of silver and bushels of pearls, for the gathering, hath invented it. We are deceived, dear friend. Spain at the ear of King James at home, Spain playing will-o'-the-wisp in Guiana, leading us into the slough of despond called Manoa!"

"Nay, Trevelion. Surely, we did sample the treasures of Guiana on our first voyage, nigh on twenty years ago; and the country has not run away."

"But we got no nearer Manoa, I fear me, than we are now, nor are ever like to be; and I have never thought the adventure, even had it been successful, worth that one brave life we lost on the Orinoco."

"David Yarcombe!" said Raleigh, with a sigh. "Poor David! He reminds me of my own dear lad, Walter, though he was taller and of a more vigorous build. I felt toward him as father to son, Trevelion."

"Nay, and I did so likewise, by your leave. He was of a rare breed; but God, in His goodness, He knoweth what is best for the creatures of His hand; blessed be the Name of the Lord! Curious folk, our women; curious, and of a marvellous constancy, and I do honour them. Mistress Lucy Withycombe is still waiting for the lad to return. Still calls him a lad; and I call her a sweet young wench, thinking of her as she was that day long ago, when we said 'Good-bye' to her and to your dear lady at Plymouth. The last time I put into Topsham, I made a run up to Littleham, and there she was, as buxom a woman as you ever clapt eyes on; rounder than when she was just a lass, with a full bosom, a wrinkle or two about the eyes, but with cherry lips and white teeth, and a smile like unto a Devon sunrise in June. And yet she said: 'No, Master Trevelion, I shall never marry, unless I marry David; and if it be not destined we meet again on earth, I pray that we may meet in heaven;' whereupon a lump came into my old throat, and I dropped on my unworthy knees and prayed to God, that, if it might be, as it could if in His great wisdom and goodness He would have it so, He would vouchsafe that David Yarcombe be still alive, and destined to come home to the woman who loves him; and if not, that they might come together in the New Jerusalem—the only golden city, my dear Raleigh; and may God help us to find it!"

"Amen!" said Raleigh.

For a fortnight they rested on the Cayenne river repairing their vessels and refreshing the crews; and Raleigh called the place Caliana. He wrote to his wife, relating to her the report of his servant about Manoa, and said that, although not the faintest clue to the death of David had turned up,

the reappearance of his servant, Henry Sparrow, encouraged him to hope that after all the young fellow might still be alive. He wrote cheerfully of the voyage, not then distressing her with any of his troubles, and giving her some pleasant little incidents of the courage and intelligence of their son, Walter. Among other things, he wrote: "To tell you I might be king here, King of the Indians, were a vanity; but my name hath still lived among them. Here they feed me with fresh meat and all that the country yields; and offer to obey me. Commend me to my son, Carew."

CHAPTER XI

"ALAS, POOR DREAMER !"

O H, those might-have-beens ! Raleigh, King of the Indian country ; David, Inca of Manoa, Emperor of Guiana. What an alliance that might have been !

But fortune had turned her back on Raleigh. Spain and the wily Gondomar for the time being had won her smiles. Raleigh sent forward, by way of Surinam and Essequibo, an expedition to search for the gold mine on the Orinoco. He was too ill to attempt the journey himself. He coasted, with the fleet, along the coast of South America ; and on December 15th stood off Trinidad. He assigned his old friend and servant, Captain Keymis, as commander of the Orinoco expedition ; and with him were Captain Trevelion, George Raleigh, Sir Walter's nephew, and his own son, Walter. It was New Year's eve when Raleigh landed at a village in Trinidad, close to Port of Spain ; and there he waited all through January 1618.

Meanwhile the Keymis expedition was meeting with trouble and disaster, unhappily, altogether ignorant of the importance of the Indian reports of a great White King that now ruled in Manoa. Both Keymis and Trevelion regarded the whole business as mythical. Though they met natives who knew the territories on the borderland of Manoa, and who had seen the White Inca himself, on a charger at the head of his troops, and reported the coming and going far inland of caravans of llamas and of the making of roads,

Raleigh's officers only regarded the stories as developments of the original myths and inventions of de Berreo, designed for their destruction. The Spaniards, however, knew far more about Guiana than Sir Walter or his officers. They were marching in force towards the golden gates. What the dons had achieved in Mexico and Peru, they might well count upon rivalling in Guiana, even against the civilised opposition of the great White King. They believed in the European Inca, who had succeeded Topago. He was no myth to them. It had long been known that their first expedition had been annihilated by the new monarch, alleged to be the sun-god's messenger and prince. De Berreo had ferreted all this out, and shrewdly suspected that the great White King was no other than one of Raleigh's lost officers. But unlike Sir Walter Raleigh, de Berreo was not discredited by his King. On the contrary, he had command of every kind of material support—ships, boats, men, money, authority; and he was as cunning as he was energetic and persistent. Trevelion, who was by no means of a cruel disposition, had more than once expressed doubts of the wisdom of releasing de Berreo. The wily Spaniard's death would have been of incalculable advantage to the plans of Raleigh.

In February, Sir Walter returned to Porto Gallo, on the mainland, anxious for news from the Orinoco; which came on the 13th (unlucky day), announcing the death of his son. Keymis had attacked the Spanish settlement of San Thomé. The Spaniards having struck the first blow, Keymis went for them with all his force. Young Raleigh led the pikemen. He was struck down as he was shouting, "Come on, my men! This is the only mine you will ever find!" Nothing could better show the loss of hope of the Keymis men in their search for the Caroni gold. The fight was gallantly maintained. Trevelion performed wonders. They took the town, and buried young Raleigh

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and Captain Cosmer near the high-altar in the church of San Thomé. A week afterwards Keymis, with a bare handful of men, ventured to make for the mine in a couple of launches. They fell into an ambuscade. Nine out of those in the first boat were killed or wounded. Keymis was naturally discouraged. Trelvelion would have gone on. The rest were with Keymis, in counselling a return to San Thomé for more soldiers. Meanwhile, George Raleigh had made an expedition from the town on his own account, ascending the Orinoco to its junction with the Guarico. His views were directed rather to colonisation than to mining. If he had prosecuted his voyage far enough, he would have met a water expedition under the command of the son of the great White King! Men brush shoulders with fate, conceiving nought of the strange passing thrills they experience. It was in the air wherever they went, the fairy tale of Manoa. "The great White King!" A myth, the flattering invention of the dusky Indians, who desired to compliment the English pioneer, or the malicious will-o'-the-wisp of de Berreo and his co-conspirators to fascinate the dreamer, Raleigh.

Alas, poor dreamer! As if his heart were not sufficiently torn by the death of his son and the disastrous failure of the expedition, he must feel almost accessory to the death of Keymis. Keymis, believing that a great Spanish army was upon him, had relinquished the search for the mine and retreated to his vessels, first burning San Thomé. Raleigh upbraided him, and declined to undertake his justification to the State. There was no kinder or more generous leader than Raleigh; yet he seems, in this instance, to have treated an old and distinguished comrade with a want of consideration, if not with harshness. He declared that as his son was killed, Keymis should not have cared if he had lost a hundred others in opening the mine, so that the King had been satisfied; for Raleigh knew well enough

that to go home empty-handed was to be disgraced beyond atonement in the eyes of King James, while the attack on the Spanish settlement of San Thomé would not fail to be used by Gondomar for fresh impeachment. James would have no ear for reports of dangers and difficulties unparalleled, overcome at sea and on land; no sympathy with statements involving charges of conspiracy against his Spanish friends; no regard for English accounts of ambushes; no instinct of pride in the splendid attack and defeat of San Thomé, the gallant death of young Raleigh, or *Rawley*, as he pronounced it in derision. Raleigh went for the gold. Where was it? Dejection, disappointment, irritation that he had been too sick to lead the expedition and die at the mine rather than give it up, no doubt made the moment very inopportune at which Keymis submitted to Raleigh a letter to Lord Arundel (one of the chief promotors of the expedition) of explanation, excuse, and apology. He asked for Raleigh's approval of the letter. Raleigh refused it absolutely. "Is that your resolution? Then, I know what course to take," replied the unhappy man; and he went out and shot himself.

Though it might fairly have been contended that San Thomé lay outside the agreement that Raleigh should not injure Spain, Gondomar contrived to over-ride this contention; and on Raleigh's return to England, broken in health and fortune, James assured Spain that "not all those who had given security for Raleigh could save him from the gallows." With vicious speed and unrelenting malice, he threw Raleigh back into the Tower.

In face of a public disposition to resent the Spanish charges against Raleigh, and the possibility that a jury might not be found to convict him, a Commission was appointed to inquire into the matter. After frequently examining the prisoner it reported that no legal judgment

could be drawn against him "for any offence which he had committed as an attainted man." James had promised Spain and himself that Raleigh should die; and he resolved to call him to judgment upon his former sentence, of some fifteen years previously, which was accordingly done, as Campbell says, "with all the circumstances of iniquity and brutality that can well be conceived." He was taken out of bed in a fit of ague, and hurried before the Court of King's bench; where, the order for his death being read, he was asked why execution should not be awarded. He offered justification of his conduct, but the Court would not hear him.

The warrant for his execution, which the King had already signed, was produced; and the very next day, Thursday October 29th, 1618, he was brought to the block. He accepted the inevitable in a cheerful spirit; ate his breakfast, smoked his pipe, and went forth to death and everlasting fame. Dr. Townson, Dean of Westminster, expostulated with him on what seemed to the Churchman an undue indifference to death; whereupon Raleigh said he never feared death, and as to the manner of it, though to others it might seem grievous, yet for himself he would rather die so, than in a burning fever.

After some conversation with a few courageous friends, including his devoted comrade, Captain Sidmouth Trevelion, who attended him on the scaffold, he concluded an address to the spectators by desiring them to join him in prayer to God, "whom I have grievously offended, being a man full of vanity, who has lived a sinful life, in such callings as have been most inducing to it. For I have been a soldier, a sailor, and a courtier; which are all courses of wickedness and vice."

On taking leave of Lord Arundel, he entreated him to use his endeavours with the King that no scandalous writings, to defame him, should be published after his

death. Then, turning to the rest, he said, "I have a long journey to go, and will, therefore, now take my leave." Putting off his gown and doublet, he called to the executioner, to show him the axe. The officer hesitated.

"I pray thee let me see it," said Raleigh; "dost thou think I am afraid of it?"

Having received it from the executioner, he felt along the edge of it; and, with a smile, said to the sheriff, "This is a sharp medicine, but it is a sound cure for all diseases."

The executioner knelt down and asked his forgiveness. Sir Walter laid his hand upon his shoulder and granted his request. The officer then asked him which way he would lay himself upon the block.

"So the heart be right," was the reply, "it is no matter which way the head lies."

His head being struck off, it was exhibited on both sides of the scaffold; and then reverently conveyed away in Lady Raleigh's mourning coach. His body was buried in St. Margaret's Church; his head being preserved by his widow, who survived him for nine-and-twenty years.

Thus fell England's great warrior and statesman, Sir Walter Raleigh, a sacrifice to the malice and pusillanimity of James I.; whose tribute to the nobility and honour of his victim, considering the occasion of it, is an aggravation of his offence against God and his country. Discovering, soon after Raleigh's death, that Spain was not likely to recompense his un-English complacency, he made one of his own ministers write to his agent in Spain to let the Court know that they should be looked upon as the most unworthy people in the world if they did not now act with the sincerity His Majesty had shown in his dealings with them; notably, of late, "By causing Sir Walter Raleigh to be put to death, chiefly for the giving of them satisfaction. Further to let them see how, in many actions

of late, His Majesty had strained upon the affections of his people, and especially in this last concerning Sir Walter Raleigh, who died with a great deal of courage and constancy. Lastly, that he should let them know how able a man Sir Walter Raleigh was to have done His Majesty service. Yet to give them content, he hath not spared him; when, by preserving him, he might have given great satisfaction to his subjects, and had at command upon all occasions as useful a man as any prince in Christendom."

CHAPTER XII

THE SPANISH ABDUCTION OF ZARANA PELUCA, QUEEN OF MANOA

NOW it came to pass, that on the last day of the feast of the sacred grove the Spaniards were at the gates of Manoa. Not in battle array ; but, as it turned out, in more dangerous aspect. They were in the disguise of one of those great trading caravans that, in the reign of the Inca David, had increased in numbers and importance, adding enormously to the wealth of Guiana and to the unique treasures of the golden city.

It came about in this wise. During the long interview between Sir Walter Raleigh's first visit to the Caroni and his second expedition to the Orinoco, the Spaniards had made great advances towards the discovery of Guiana and the possible conquest of Manoa. Neither money nor lives had been spared in the adventure. Nor was the desire for vengeance altogether a silent factor in the matter. It had filtered through Indian sources of information how the first force, under one of de Berreo's captains, nigh upon twenty years before, had fared at the hands of the usurper, whom they called the White King. Every plan that Raleigh had formed for advancing along the Caroni river to Manoa had been shrewdly conned by King Philip and his advisers. The heartless James of England had left no stone unturned to make the great Englishman's forlorn hope abortive ; and, as if even Providence was against the English venturers, Sir

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Walter, as we have seen, sailed home only to exchange his miserable bodily ailments and mental agony for the renewed torture of false accusation, which was to culminate in an ignominious death.

The attack upon San Thomé, otherwise Guayana Vieja, had left the city but little injured ; and, with fresh troops from adjacent islands that even Raleigh had overlooked, the Spanish settlement speedily became stronger and more powerful, politically and otherwise, the headquarters of the Guiana operations, the city that the Church and State had ordained for the Government of Guiana, the headquarters of the Church in those distant seas, the blessed legacy of the devoted de Berreo. It would have been no less a crime, if Raleigh had strangled de Berreo when he was in his power, a prisoner of war ; but, as events turned out, it might have been the one pardonable high-handed act that fate had ordained as necessary to English success in those regions ; for de Berreo was the heart and soul and watchful eye of the Spanish advance.

By land and river, bodies of Spanish troops had, during several years, been gradually making their way through the Indian territory to the borders of Guiana and the frontiers of Manoa. By dint of presents and promises of power, vanguards of the Spanish hosts had gained influence with certain Indian kings and chiefs, to give them free passage through their territories, ostensibly to reach another ocean, which the Spaniards explained to them lay beyond the mountains ; so that they marched, as they said, from sea to sea. With the aid of spies and the information of their own adventurous spirits, they had gained an approximate idea of the situation and defensive works of Manoa.

Debouching into a vast plain, bordering a forest only a league or two from Manoa, a Spanish force had encountered the caravan of a body of Manoan merchants on its return journey from a distant Indian kingdom to the golden city.

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It was made up of heavily burdened llamas, half-breeds (the free labourers of the city) carrying baggage on their heads, others with a kind of hand-barrow with tents and poles, and some half-dozen llamas in shafts, drawing carts so constructed that, in defiles where wheels might be impossible, they could be unlocked and the carts carried by hand. There was an armed escort, that was easily, however, surprised and overcome as the caravan skirted the forest, where the Spaniards, having sighted them from a point of vantage, lay in ambush. Escort and merchants made a gallant stand that was fatal to several of their number.

The Spaniards now put into practice a cunning and daring scheme for entering Manoa and making themselves acquainted with the defences of the mountain defiles, that were said to be impregnable, except to a bold and patriotic army willing to incur perils that could not fail to lead to great loss of life. It might be, the leaders of this adventurous party argued, that some subtle means of getting round the reputed fortresses and making a dash upon the treasures of the city might be discovered after the manner of their countrymen in Mexico and Peru, where small bodies of resolute cavaliers had by strategy and courage frequently defeated whole armies. While they admitted that their predecessors in the conquests of Mexico and Peru had no mysterious great White King to meet, who had annihilated the vanguard of the boasted conquerors of Guiana, yet they had just experienced what might be done by a daring surprise. Accepting the omen as encouraging, and offering up a fervent prayer to the Virgin, with the blood of the infidel on their swords they resolved to enter Manoa. Dispatching the wounded and burying the dead, they marched the living, with their llamas, baggage, and other impedimenta, into the forest.

Finding a convenient path and a clearing at no great distance; where at some time or other Indian travellers

had evidently encamped, they ordered the captives to unload such goods as were necessary for a few days' rest. Packages that contained precious stones they set apart for themselves, and otherwise lessened the merchandise, but not to such an extent as to make the caravan seem unusually limited. Then, placing the arms of their captives with the looted goods apart and under guard, they stripped them of such garments as were necessary to their own disguise, concealing their swords and bucklers and their unwieldy but useful firearms underneath the merchants' gowns, or placed ready with the baggage on the llamas' backs or in the carts. Under torture they extracted from the Manoan half-breeds particulars of the route and the passwords, and offering the chief merchant of the party his life on condition that he would ride at their head, as was his custom with the caravan, and utter no word, they swore him by the sun and the moon, by their own Cross, and by all he held dear (and he had a wife and three children, whom he loved) to obey them. He undertook the office; but, with his oath, had in his heart prayed his god to exonerate its breach for the sake of his country—a reservation that the soldier-priest, who administered the oath, might well have counted upon; for cunning is the weapon of the weak. One would ride by the side of the Manoan merchant who, at the smallest attempt at treachery, would cut his throat from ear to ear.

The merchant accepted the conditions, and took up his staff. As he did so, he remembered that the Queen and the priestesses of the sacred grove were now celebrating their feast of harvest; and he made a point of explaining to his Spanish commanders a feature of the route that had not been sufficiently marked by the tortured half-breeds. The merchant knew that two of his daughters, maidens of the Court, would be in attendance on the Queen by the lake of the sacred grove, and he feared the

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Spaniards suddenly breaking in upon their ceremonies; the more so, that the grove was considered sufficiently protected without any other guard than the honour and reverence of the people. The leader of the cavaliers made a diagram of the route, and marked the two ways that led into the city; and, observing that the merchant betrayed an unmistakable anxiety that they should enter by the left, resolved to take the road on the right. As they would reach Manoa close upon the going down of the sun, the merchant confessed that they would easily be able to return without exciting the suspicion of the garrisons on the heights.

"Before we march, tell me," said the Spanish leader, "what will our booty be?"

"Gold and silver," said the merchant, "if that be your desire."

"It is our desire, most courteous cabalero," said the Spaniard, with something of a mocking smile.

"Manoa has plenty, and to spare; but it would rather barter with you in honest trade than——"

"Cease, offensive pagan beast!" was the hot reply.

"We come as messengers of the Imperial sway of our King, who claims supremacy over all these countries, and counts your great White King as his vassal."

"Our great White King hath his power from the great white god, the creator and sustainer of the world," said the merchant.

"I fear me we shall have to cut thy dusky throat ere we come to the gates," said the Spaniard. "'Tis well that thou shouldst be humble and of a wary tongue. Dost hear?"

"Most excellent, I hear, and obey," said the merchant, for he thought once more of his wife and daughters.

"What chance of opposition? Speak me true, or, by the Holy Virgin, I'll split thee from crown to buttock. What chance of opposition? When we emerge into the city, what guards may we meet?"

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"None, I trust, most excellent. Nay, I speak you true, for I would have you speed in the capture of your booty. So you may the quicker be out of the city, that will be polluted by your presence."

Do all he could, the merchant failed to keep his tongue in discreet check.

"Dog! Pagan!" said the Spaniard. "Yet do I believe thee. When we emerge——"

"You will come straightway upon the garden-house of the King's chief minister; his women will be away, at the feast of harvest in the sacred grove. His men are not soldiers; they are gardeners chiefly, and most like they may be in the market-place, for to-night 'tis the festival of the full moon. If you enter by the gates that front you as you come into the open, you will have no opposition that you cannot silence with a word, and the minister's receiving rooms and galleries are rich with statues of gold, precious tapestries, and decorations of pearl."

"This is true, on the oath of a worshipper of the sun, on the sacred altar of a true man, and in fear of our holy Cross?"

"On the honour of a citizen of Manoa," said the merchant.

By this time the vast mountain front of the Manoan range was in sight.

"Henceforth, then, thou wilt hold thy peace, on pain of death. This gallant gentleman of Spain, who walks by thy side, will be thy executioner."

Arriving at the mountain pass, they exchanged the usual signals; the sentinel appeared above the ramparts, and in due course the mighty gates swung back and the caravan entered. Sentinels, one on each side of the way, welcomed the caravan with cheery words that were but poorly responded to; which, however, only drew forth remarks of pleasant protest. As the last loads passed,

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the rear-guard, having its carefully laid-out plans of instructions, fell suddenly upon the sentinels and slew them. Taking from them their pikes and the pistols of Anglo-Manoan make that were in their belts, they hid their bodies among the rocks. Then, going boldly up the steps that were cut in the mountain side, to the point where the labourers worked the great windlass arrangements that opened and closed the gates, they took possession of the little force, and fell upon the other armed guards, who were coolly leaning over the parapet and watching the caravan as it wound quietly along the valley below. Thus was the enemy in possession of the gate. If the army, supposed to be only a few leagues in the rear, could have come up at that moment, Manoa might have fallen; but the conquest of Guiana was not yet, though the golden city was on the eve of a terrible tribulation.

They had covered a distance of some eight or ten leagues, when they arrived at the first station on the route, situated in the valley. All the other stations were on the heights, and therefore at too great a distance for the sentinels to observe anything that might strike them as unusual in their appearance. The leader commanded a halt, and the warrior-priest who spoke the Indian tongue made some ordinary courteous remark, at which the master of the station smiled in a dubious way and addressed the merchant, who observed a stolid silence. Then the chief of the post addressed the warrior-priest again, and was observed by the Spanish leader to whisper some instructions to a youth, who at once, climbing an open stairway, disappeared in a cleft of the rock.

"After him, and dispatch him with thy dagger!" he commanded, touching his nearest comrade on the shoulder; "after him, and bring me his head."

In an instant the soldier, casting aside his disguise,

rushed after the evident messenger ; and as he did so, at a signal, there was a sudden rush upon the little post, and the guardians were silenced with hardly a groan. The merchant, pale with terror, could only look on and hope that the messenger to the fort above might elude his follower ; but ere the post was massacred the Spaniard returned with the bloody trophy which the leader had demanded.

And now, hurriedly hiding the three bodies, the Spaniards left in the place of the murdered post two of their own men, and held a council of war as they marched forward. Some of the most venturesome of the company were for surprising the garrisons and holding them, while the rest carried to Caroni the news of their achievement and hurried up troops to the capture of the city ; but this was speedily overruled by the leader.

While they were debating, each man speaking in a whisper, they came to the parting of the ways. The Spanish chief surveyed the two. That on the right seemed to present a severer route than the one they had come. Within musket-shot, he observed either a signal station or a half-disguised battery of guns, above which a flag was flying. On the left the roadway dipped in soft undulations of a cultivated path, with many kinds of flowers bordering the decreasing heights, as if the way should lead to some sweet and sheltered valley. The right appeared to lead upwards. There were murmurs from the left as of a village, and distant sounds of music. The Spaniard noted this, as he stood deliberating ; the merchant watched him with unconcealed anxiety, and was more than once on the point of speaking. The "gallant gentleman of Spain" who held guardianship over him kept the merchant in steady view.

"By the right, gentlemen !" said the Spanish chief.

"By the left !" cried the merchant.

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And hardly had the words escaped him than he fell before the sweeping sword of the "gallant gentleman of Spain," to be at once wrapped in a tent-cloth and strapped upon a llama; whereupon the caravan went forward, and within half a Spanish mile, as the sun was declining, they halted before a scene of surpassing beauty: a lake that reflected a vast white palace with glittering spires of gold, and on the brink a procession of women in radiant costume.

The palace was in truth the temple of the sacred grove. It was approached from the lake by terraces of flowers and marble steps. Around it were avenues of trees, many bearing rich fruits; at their base, closely trimmed lawns of blue-green grass; the whole shut in by soft-outlined hills, the foot-hills of a mountain range clothed with graceful trees, and broken with hard limestone rocks, or, as the Spaniards believed, cliffs of gold-quartz, for the sun gilded them with a strange and beautiful radiance. The god whom the Manoans worshipped was rapidly going down into the regions of rest, while the moon should be preparing to take upon herself the subdued radiance of the sublime ruler. It was the feast of the sacred grove, when the Queen of Manoa and her maidens visited the priestesses of the earth's first garden, to bathe in the sacred lake and pray in the temple of the grove, doing honour in the day to the sun-god himself, and at night to pay the tribute of their devotion to the sun's mistress of the night, the gentler moon. It was a scene more like heaven than anything the Spanish host had ever seen or imagined. The warrior-priest crossed himself, and stepped back with holy awe and fear; and the troop paused irresolutely.

As the procession moved, so that the attendant priestesses partly faced the intruders, the women waved the caravan back, not with fearful but with graceful gesticulations. They regarded the strangers simply as Manoans who had

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come from a far journey, and had missed their way or had forgotten the time of the sacred feast. The Spanish chief realising the situation at once withdrew his force, and the ceremonial of the women, whatever it might be, was continued.

"Gentlemen, comrades," said the Spaniard, "yonder is the reward of courage: a temple of the gods, with its vessels of gold, its golden altar, its chalices of precious metals and gems, and its virgins for brave men. Off with your disguises, unlimber your arms, stretch your muscles. Twenty come with me; ten on guard, in case of surprise. Ready?"

"Ready!" was the prompt answer, amidst a bustle of preparation.

"Yonder woman, paler than the rest, wears a crown. 'Tis the Queen, perhaps; harm her not; we take her as our prisoner; the chief priestess also. Waste no time in making love. Let each man carry such weight of treasure as he can conveniently march withal. The women gagged, we strap them upon a couple of llamas; and then, away, fleet as may be, for our comrades at the gate and the open country. 'Tis understood, gentlemen?"

"'Tis understood!" they answered.

"Then, onward! And may Saint Mary and Holy Church confound them!"

It was the work of but few minutes to fall upon the devoted women, seize the Queen and the most conspicuous of her companions, enter the temple and tear from the altar its uncumbered treasures; to break down a glorious golden disc representing the sun, studded with diamonds, and to carry off from a lower pedestal an emblem of the moon, set in stones that seemed to repeat the orb in a thousand iridescent globes.

But for the rough commands of the chief, more than one lustful wretch might have fallen into the hands of the

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Manoans. A mutinous trooper pursuing one of the dead merchant's daughters into a recess of the temple, fell over a balustrade, and lay there with a broken neck; while his comrades, not counting his loss or unwilling to tarry one moment longer than served to fulfil their chief's instructions, made good their retreat.

Before the sun had left the world in darkness the marauders had regained the road where the two ways met, and marched, with all the haste they could, encumbered by their loads, and having to urge on the llamas with their half-dead burdens.

"So soon as we are free of these infernal passes, dear ladies," said the Spaniard, walking by the side of the Queen and the priestess, "the impediments to speech, that thrall you, shall be removed, and you shall be well treated."

The signal lights and the battery fires burnt high above them. From these stations the gorge and deep valleys were black; and the Spanish bandits moved on even more safely from attack than they had come. At the open gates they found their comrades on guard; and during their adventure a company of horse, from Caroni, had arrived, following the marks and signs on rocks and trees of the adventurers on foot, who had marched from a point on the Caroni river where they had left their galleys. A council of war was held. It was resolved that the mounted men should take charge of the two prisoners and the smaller articles of loot, and make straight for the river and dispatch their booty to the station at Caroni, and thence to Guayana Vieja.

"We spare your lives," said the Spaniard to the trembling company they had left bound in the forest, "on condition that you pledge yourselves to make no attempt to loosen your bonds until the morning; if, peradventure, you disobey, we have forces near by that will take speedy vengeance upon you."

The prisoners promised, and the Spaniards, being already

sufficiently burdened with plunder, left the guard to carry off what they could from the merchants' smaller treasures, and marched all through the night, often losing their path, and finding it by gleams of lightning, that at first played upon them in sheets of glorious flame, to be followed after a time by a storm of wind. They groaned under their loads and cursed them, some of them throwing down heavy vessels of gold, and more than one their muskets. At midnight they heard the mysterious boom, as of cannon, that twenty odd years before had startled David Yarcombe. They concluded that a Spanish force had encountered a Manoan column of pursuit. As morning dawned they surely made out the distant call of trumpets, but not of Spanish music, and they pushed forward with trembling knees, to fall upon them at last with prayers of thankfulness on sighting their galleys, ready to receive them, and unwind their moorings.

One of their lightest boats had already rowed up the river, with the two women prisoners and certain of the booty carried by the reconnoitring troop of horse, that had continued its march in the direction of Guayana Vieja. The warrior-priest, who had now laid aside his sword and buckler and resumed his cassock, was jubilant at the success of the expedition. He had learnt from the captain of the river flotilla that the women prisoners had confessed their rank—the one as Queen of Manoa, the other the chief priestess of the sacred grove—to be utilised as missionaries, being penitent, and received into Holy Church, or as examples of the Divine vengeance.

CHAPTER XIII

"THERE IS NO MAKING TREATIES WITH SPAIN"

NOW David, during the feast of the sacred grove, which was peculiarly a women's ceremonial, had utilised the period of his wife's absence at the palace of the sacred lake in exercising an armed force for river service, offensive and defensive. Ever watchful of a possible attack by Spain, he felt that their approach would be made by the Orinoco and the Caroni, whether they elected to force the Manoa water-way or assailed her mountain passes. His idea was to meet them on the river, or at their landing-place, which he made no doubt would be at Caroni. The secret water-way, by which he had entered Manoa, was impregnable, all the more valuable to him now that he had organised a fleet of boats. He felt almost as safe concerning the mountain gateway and garrisons of the cliffs, though, as we have seen, the strategy of the wily Spaniard had found a path through the gorges and valleys under his very guns, the while he was playing at warfare, at assault and defence, on the Caroni, his rowers and warriors attired in fighting costume, he himself equipped for war and for the parade of it, carrying his regal insignia, including his jewelled crown, his breastplate and sword, for his people loved show and colour. The royal standard, representing the sun, with minor banners quartering the moon and the stars and the lightning, all of which were regarded as ministers of the supreme god of

day, were artistic examples of embroidery and jewelled decoration, with splashes of colour and quaintness of form that were something in the direction of what we know to-day as Japanese.

Indian scouts and spies, whom he had trained in a secret service that he had organised, had brought him undoubted intelligence of the appearance of Spanish galleys on the Orinoco, near the mouth of the Caroni river. One of his men, who had won the friendship of certain chiefs of the late King Topiawari, had indeed news of white men having appeared on the river, making for the mines (upon which Raleigh had counted for the satisfying of his avaricious friends), and had been surprised and massacred by other white men. David, pondering this report for many days, had come to the conclusion that surely it must relate to an encounter between English and Spanish expeditions. The same scout had a vague story of an attack upon a Spanish city on the sea-board, at the mouth of the Orinoco; only to this extent had a whisper of Raleigh's second expedition reached the White King of Manoa, though he and his prowess had been proclaimed to Raleigh and his followers without the narrators offering to them the smallest possible suggestion of association with their lost comrade.

David had taught the Manoans, not only to build galleys and heavy boats for long river voyages, but he had got together quite a river fleet. He had navigated it through the secret water-way and exercised his crews in conducting a mimic warfare, having vanguards and rearguards of canoes, that dashed up against the current with almost as great a speed as they rode upon the rapid flow. The rowers in the galleys also made headway at a good rate; and on the very day when the Spanish troopers were galloping to Caroni with his Queen, had been within a few leagues of the place of their embarkation. But it had not been David's cue to expose his operations

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to some Spanish traveller, or even to let the Caronians know more of his movements than was necessary. It was not until the prisoners were well on their way to the Spanish city of Guayana Vieja that David was startled by the Manoan trumpet call, presently followed by the appearance of a troop of horse headed by his son, galloping across the plain from the direction of Manoa. His heart sank when he noted the pale, anxious face of the lad, and the excited looks of his men. The terrible story was quickly told.

"Dismount, my son, while I bless thee, and call upon the God of Christian England and the sun-god of our beloved Manoa to prosper thy expedition."

The lad slid from his horse and knelt at his father's feet; and when David had blessed him, he took him into his arms and kissed him.

"Captain Ikkaraka, dismount."

A stalwart, dark-eyed warrior stood before the King.

"Thou art a just man and a patriot, of a noble descent, and among my most trusted. Thou wilt return to the city, and, under the command of Parexes, despatch in support of the Prince's troop a thousand horse and foot, provisioned for ten days, with full equipment of tents and commissariat. Let them march with all speed, their first rendezvous Caroni, by the mines. There will I give them further instructions. Thou shalt then strengthen the garrisons between Manoa and the gates, and make stations along the valley, with flag signals and torches, each station to be situated between every garrison on the cliffs. Manoa must suffer no second surprise. Until my return, or my son's, thou shalt be governor of Manoa, our second self, but with all proper conference with our most wise and esteemed councillors."

"'Tis too much honour," said Ikkaraka; though, in saying so, he looked fearlessly into David's eyes.

"Does the responsibility awe thee?"

"No, good my lord of the sun; since, with thy commands, I shall surely receive an inspiration of thy wisdom."

"I trust thee, Ikkaraka. I have loved thee ever since the day I first grasped thy hand and took thee into my counsel. Thou shalt carry with thee my orders in writing. And now, my son, forward! and the gods be with thee. We shall meet at Caroni."

Upon which the young Prince, reining up his steed, gave the word, "Forward!" The troop, raising a mighty cheer, rode off with its fluttering pennons; and David and his chieftain made for the river, where the Inca, David, giving Ikkaraka his written orders, parted with him.

"Ikkaraka, it is borne in upon me that Manoa may see me no more."

"The great god forbid!" said the chief.

"Amen!" said David. "And yet I fear; for I know this enemy, of Spain. If it be thy lot to encounter him, fight to the death; and if it be the will of the gods that they come in overpowering force, do not forget that death is better than dishonour, and that there is no making treaties with the devil."

And ere the day was ended, David, with his flotilla, was on his way to Caroni.

It came to pass that at Caroni the young Prince Walter met a Spanish force, before the Inca's flotilla had come up. He fell upon them with splendid energy, and vanquished them. Leaving many dead and wounded upon the field, they retreated towards Caiamao in hot haste, pursued by the Manoans, who were reinforced by a body of the late King of Topiawari's Indian warriors. Topiawari's chieftains had been on the warpath since the

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failure of Sir Walter Raleigh's second voyage. The Spaniards, who had assailed Sir Walter's small party of explorers, had cruelly murdered a number of Indian labourers and taken possession of the mines; to be themselves, however, attacked, and slain to a man. The Indian blood was up, and they hailed with delight the Manoan troop. The Topiawari men were superbly armed, with battle-axes, maces, and lances. Many also carried the lasso, which they used with deadly skill against the Spanish horse, pulling the riders from their saddles, and killing them with their axes. They wore doublets of thick quilted cotton, their shields were covered with tanned skins, and they had casques of silver and gold, ornamented with flaming jewels. Their arms were chiefly of copper, tempered almost to the hardness of steel.

Leaving a small company to await the arrival of his father, the Inca, Prince Walter laid siege to Caiamao. In the night the Spaniards fled, and were driven into the Orinoco by the Indians; who, throwing off their doublets, swam into the mighty stream and slew such as had not already sunk under the turbulent waters.

CHAPTER IV

VICTIMS OF THE SPANISH INQUISITION

IN the meantime, ignorant of the havoc the outer barbarians were making upon their forces, the Spaniards at Guayana Vieja were engaged in their civilising and religious work. Captured off Trinidad, an English crew, driven by stress of weather into the Gulf of Paria, had been sent as prisoners to Guyana Vieja. Having been imprisoned for many months, they had been separately, on several occasions, called before the inquisitors, and each examined of the faith, and commanded to say the *Paternoster* and the *Ave Maria* and the Creed in Latin, which most of them could not say otherwise than in the English tongue. Then, one of their number, who knew how to speak in Spanish, explained that he knew how to say the same in their own country language. This was endorsed by a priest, who, being inclined to treat them with some compassion, was rebuked by the Chief Inquisitor; and this priest was the same whom the readers will remember at the Mitre House of the Lysons, in London. The officers then demanded of the men, upon their oaths, what they did believe of the Sacrament, and whether there did remain any bread or wine after the words of consecration. "Yea," or "No"; and whether they did not believe that the "Host," of bread which the priest did hold up over his head, and the wine that was in the chalice, was the very true and perfect body of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Yea," or

"No"; to which if they answered not "Yea," then there was no way but death. Then they would demand what the bewildered sailors remembered of themselves, what opinions they had held or had been taught to hold, contrary to the same, whilst they were in England; to which, for their safety they were constrained to say what they never did believe, nor had been taught otherwise than what they said. Thereupon, the cruel and cunning Inquisitors would charge them that that they did not confess the truth, and that they should make better answers, or they would be made to do so. And so, coming before them again, the poor sailors would tell the truth, and yet claim that they desired to believe what their Inquisitors wished; for the men hoped to be thus released, that they might go home to their wives and families in England.

"If," said the one who spoke Spanish, "we have declared or thought, in our ignorance, anything, in England or elsewhere, against our Lady, or any of the blessed saints, we are heartily sorry for the same and are very penitent thereof, and beseech your reverences and excellencies to be merciful unto us for God's sake, considering that we came into these countries by force of weather and against our wills, and have not wittingly done anything against your laws and customs."

Nevertheless, they were from time to time racked and otherwise tortured. During their paroxysms of pain they said things that were considered sufficient for the Inquisition to proceed to judgment; and thereupon they caused a mighty scaffold to be erected in the market-place, over against the head church, and fifteen days before the day of their judgment, with the sound of a trumpet and the noise of the *attabalies*, which are a kind of drum, they assembled the people from all parts of the city, before whom it was then solemnly proclaimed that whosoever would, upon such a day, repair thither, they should hear

the sentence of the holy Inquisition against the English heretic Lutherans, and also see the same put into execution.

Now, it was at this unhappy moment that the flotilla of Spanish boats arrived from Caroni, with the two prisoners on board, Zarana Peluca, Queen of Manoa, and Adelenda Koomari, the chief priestess of the sacred grove.

They were handed over to the "Sister in God," Rebecca de Salis, a grim, wizened thing, more typical of the fabled witches of Endor than anything human, the confederate of that Papist spy and traitor, Anthony Kennock, who fell before the sword of David Yarcombe in the days of his youth at Littleham.

She addressed the poor sufferers in Spanish and in English. Zarana Peluca had often heard David speak to himself in the latter tongue, and a light came into her eye and a flutter of hope to her heart at the sound of it. But she could make no answer, except in her own tongue and in the Indian, in which she begged to know why she and her sister-captive had been maltreated, and why they were to be shut up in a dark cell. The sister of Satan laughed and made mock of them, and presently brought to them the priest of the Lysons, who came with a masked officer of the Inquisition. The member of the Holy Office addressed them in Spanish. They replied, first in Manoa and then in Indian. The latter he understood, and thereupon asked their names, which he wrote down in a book.

"I am Zarana Peluca, the daughter of Tapago, the Inca of Manoa and Emperor of Guiana, and wife of the Inca David, the present reigning monarch. And I demand from you, whoever you may be, the treatment that is becoming to a Queen."

"Your demand is that of a traitor and usurper," said the officer, "against our Sovereign, King Philip of Spain."

"I know him not," said the Queen.

"And your faith? In whom do you put your trust?"

"In my god and the strong arm of my consort, the Inca David."

"We shall see how that will avail thee," said the officer; and turning to the priestess, who surveyed him with angelic simplicity, he asked: "And you, who belong to an ungodly sisterhood that doth savour of witchcraft,—your name?"

"I am Adelenda Koomari, the chief priestess of the sacred grove."

The officer crossed himself, and mumbled a hasty prayer against the arts and crafts of the devil before he wrote down the words she had uttered.

"And the articles of your belief?"

"I do not understand you, sir."

"In whom do you put your trust?"

"In the god of my Queen, and in the strong arm of his son and servant on earth, the Inca David."

"Blasphemy! blasphemy! Most devilish!" exclaimed the Inquisitor.

Then, raising his hand for a signal, two other officers entered, covered to their feet with long grey robes in which two holes gave play to their eyes: a dual apparition calculated to terrify the most courageous of mortals.

The priest of the Lysons stood all the time an attentive observer. Once, for a moment, he attracted the attention of the Inquisitor by a suppressed exclamation. He had noticed the ring on Zarana Peluca's finger. It was the ring that Mary Lysons had given to David.

"Bind them," said the Inquisitor.

The two jailers strapped the women's arms, and led them forth. They cast pitiful glances at the priest, but uttered no word. Never did the Church embrace within the deadly folds of the Inquisition two more beautiful or noble-minded martyrs.

A few days afterwards they were condemned; for news had been brought in that the Inca of Manoa and his son,

having defeated the Spanish forces beyond the river, were now threatening Guayana Vieja. The Governor had no fear of any force that might be brought against the citadel, which was splendidly garrisoned and armed, both on its river front and by land. At the same time it behoved the Church to assert her authority and appease offended God, by doing justice upon His enemies, and purging the world of witchcraft by the sacred flames of a righteous vengeance.

Therefore the people of Guayana Vieja were warned to look forward to an exhibition of the Justice of the Holy Inquisition, supplementary to that previously announced.

The night before the appointed day of punishment, the priest of the Lysons was permitted to enter the cell of the rebel Queen, the witch who swore by the sun and had yet fainted at the pressure of the iron crown.

"Madame, believe me," he said, "I grieve for you, and would fain help you."

"I thank you, sir. I saw the spell of kindness in your face."

"You wear a curious ring upon your finger; may I see it?"

She held out her hand.

"I do not desire to question you against your will or for your harm; but I have seen that ring before."

"'Give it to your wife,' was the command with which the Inca, my loving husband, received it from a holy sister in the distant land that was his home."

The priest examined it, and reverently bent his head and kissed it.

"'Tis the same, dear lady; I knew the sister who placed it on his finger, a holy devotee, a saintly woman of Holy Church. Strange are the ways of the Lord! And by that solemn and holy token, I must also know your husband, whom you call David. 'Tis miraculous! What else can you remember? Was the other name Yarcombe?"

"Yes, truly," she said, and smiled with heavenly sweetness; "David Yarcombe, the Inca of Manoa."

"O God! O Holy Mother of God, help this woman!" he cried, falling upon his knees. "O Christ, help her! If it be not within Thy boundless providence to save her from the bitter cup that is presented to her lips, then take her to Thine everlasting kingdom. Spare her, O God, all pangs of purgatory. She knoweth not what she hath said. An outcast who hath never heard of Thee, and who in her blindness worships the greatest work of Thy hand, may surely claim Thy Fatherly forgiveness. And this I pray, for Christ His sake, Amen!"

"Dost so pray, indeed?" said a harsh voice, as a grim figure entered from a secret door, and laid a heavy hand upon the unhappy priest and dragged him thence.

The prayer and the intruder's words were uttered in Spanish. The poor Queen could only feel that the priest had made supplication on her behalf, and in this had offended his Order. She sat down upon the stone bench, and the tears welled into her eyes. In her heart she wondered why her own god had forsaken her. She pondered over her life for years past, to find in what she had offended; and concluded, with gentle resignation, that her punishment was due to the grave fault that she had, perchance, been too happy. Her heart was sore for the love of David and her son, and full of pity for the priestess, her sister of Manoa, whom she had not seen since the first night of their imprisonment. She wondered what sort of a god her gaolers could worship, since he rejoiced in such ministers as those who, behind a mask, committed cruelties beyond belief, and called the servitor who brought her the rank food permitted to her a "sister in God"!

CHAPTER XV

THE TERRIBLE AFFLICTION OF DAVID, AND THE DOOM OF GUAYANA VIEJA

NOW, when the morning of the day of the judgment of the Inquisition had come, there appeared, on the banks of the Caroni opposite to the citadel, the force of Prince Walter of Manoa, with his Indian allies ; and there they pitched their tents. Their trumpets and drums could be heard in the city ; and presently, the thunder of the guns of the citadel, the balls of which, however, fell short of the encampment. They made threatening splashes in the water, which the Inca David observed as he brought his flotilla almost within range, but at a sufficiently safe distance lower down the river, to enable him to make his dispositions for conveying troops across without interference.

First, however, he hoisted a white flag, and sent a canoe with a message of parley and a generous offer of withdrawal. "Release unto me my wife, Zarana Peluca, and the sister Adelenda Koomari, together with such English prisoners and Indians as may be in your hands, and I will leave you and your city unmolested. Deny me, and I swear, by the God of Christian England, the gods of Manoa and Guiana, and the name of Queen Elizabeth, that I will not leave a stone of your city standing, nor a soul of your people to tell the story of Manoan vengeance !"

With much ceremony and a mighty work of drawbridge and the opening of ponderous water-gates, the canoe dis-

appeared ; and, after awaiting its return for a long and vexatious time, the drawbridge was lifted, the ponderous gates reopened, and the canoe thrust forth into the stream, with the dead body of the messenger arrayed in a ghastly yellow robe and on its head a hideous conical cap, bearing the defiant and brutal answer of the Governor and the Church : "Guayana Vieja's answer to infidels and traitors."

A yell of indignation arose from five thousand throats, as the Inca's interpreter read out the Spanish message ; and for a moment David needed all his power to prevent his forces from dashing into the river and attempting the citadel with their knives. But David explained to them the nature of the Spanish defence, its formidable arquebuses and muskets, and its cannon, much heavier than the guns they carried in their launches and galleys ; and he showed them how, by patience and valour, they should land his son's troops on the city's side of the river, and take it in flank, while he besieged it in front.

The martyred messenger was stripped of his gruesome dress, which was converted into a kind of banner to be carried at the head of the attacking force, and the body reverently placed for burial. Then began the transport of Prince Walter's men across the river ; and David rejoiced to see that a Spanish force was issuing from the city to contest their landing.

Meanwhile, the great market-place of the city presented an animated, and, to truly Christian men, a shocking spectacle ; but, in those days, not an infrequent one among the settled cities of the Spanish empire as far away from the centre of her highest civilisation as Mexico and Peru. It was with enthusiasm and delight that they carried the fiery cross to the banks of the Orinoco ; and no wonder the roots of their grim system struck deep, to bear hideous fruit, even in our own day, in the unhappy islands of the Philippines and Manilla. The prisoners had been

prepared for their part in the day's spectacle, arrayed in hideous yellow gowns marked with the Cross, and on their heads a kind of fool's cap grimly adorned, each victim with a rope round his neck and a green wax candle in his hand. The procession was accompanied by guards, and priests in monkish attire. In the market-place the prisoners found a great assembly of people, in such throngs that certain of the Inquisitors' officers on horseback were constrained to make way for them. So, coming to the scaffold, they went up a pair of stairs and found seats prepared for them, every prisoner in order, as he should be called to receive his judgment. . . . And all the while there could be heard the rumble of the guns which the Spaniards had brought to bear on the landing-party, that was to force the defences of the city; no mean task. Though the garrison had no fear for the result, the unusual music of the battle intensified and gave a sense of hurry to the judicial proceedings.

The first batch of prisoners being seated, the Inquisitors entered the scaffold from another stairway, and the chief justices with them. These high and mighty ministers and officials, being placed under the cloth of estate in accord with their degrees and callings, there followed, up the same stairway, a great number of friars, white, black and grey, to the number of about three hundred. These being duly seated, a solemn "Oyez" was made, silence commanded, and the severe and cruel judgment began. . . . One, Radford, the chief armourer of the ship *Devonia*, was adjudged three hundred stripes and condemned to the galleys, as a slave, for ten years. After him came John Brown, Peter Grey, Andrew Mooney, James Doolan, John Keyes, and William Nottage. They were condemned to receive from one to three hundred stripes, on horseback, and with the galleys and slavery to follow. Others were called, and committed for lighter punishment; and then came Cornelius, an Irishman, Momfrie Peters, and James

Martyn, Englishmen, who, being condemned to be burnt to ashes, were at once conducted from the scaffold to the stake.* While their last cries went up to heaven amidst flames and smoke and the jubilant shouts of the multitude, the second batch of prisoners entered the market-place; a heartrending picture, that drew from the crowd a murmur of surprise, in which there was something of pity and admiration.

First, came the Lysons' priest, wearing his St. Benito with as much dignity as he had worn his cassock, his face lighted by an expression of heavenly fervour. Across his headgear was written "Contumacious" and "Traitor." Many a tear trickled down pale faces at this unexpected sight, for the priest was known throughout the city for his kindly heart and his genuine piety; a priest in a thousand, for his tolerant penances, his consideration for the ignorant and the rebellious. And, thank God, there were many such in the Papal ranks—priests who carried their lives in their hands on missionary work, as sincere then as now; and sweet and kindly women, who would have sacrificed themselves for others then as they would to-day. If only the system of Rome could be adapted to the sweet humanities of many of its religionists, it would come nearer than it is, alas! to that simple, beautiful and humane teaching of the Saviour, Who must have suffered more in heaven, looking upon what has been done on earth in His Name, than ever He suffered during His Divine pilgrimage.

The priest of the Lysons took his allotted place for judgment; and then came Zarana Peluca, in her yellow robes and tall cap, a great red Cross woven on her gown, a long unlighted candle in her hand, and by her side masked "sisters of mercy." Her olive complexion was

* This account of the cruelties inflicted upon the captured crew is adapted from the narrative of Miles Phillips (1582) recorded by Hakluyt.

almost grey in the sunlight, and her eyes drooped beneath their long silken lashes. She walked as one in a dream, with uncertain footsteps, and had to be assisted to her seat of ignominy; which would surely be counted in heaven as a martyr's throne, though she had been born and bred in a faith that had not heard of Jesus. The heart of the multitude had never been so keenly touched as at sight of these three captives: the priest, whom so many loved, the tender, sweet-looking Queen of the worshippers of the sun, and the infidel priestess, whose presence seemed to fill the market-place, as she turned her great fearless eyes upon the crowd. When the grim sister, who alone among the few women attendants was unmasked, put forth her hand, as if to assist her to mount the scaffold, she thrust her aside with an action of infinite scorn. Then came the judgment in formal terms, pronounced by the Chief Justice with a ferocity that was intended to impress the populace with the triumph of the Church over Satan, who had assumed these beautiful shapes the better to deceive the unwary, witchcraft being one of the most evil of Satan's instruments, as was evidenced in the power this woman, who called herself the Queen of Manoa, had exercised over their brother, this now contumacious and revolted priest.

As the Chief Justice pronounced the decree of death by fire upon the three prisoners, not a word of which either of the women understood, the priest of the Lysons cried, "O God, have mercy upon the innocent!" Whereupon it seemed as if the very earth shook beneath their feet; for the heavy battery of the citadel's guns, one after the other, in quick succession, began to play upon the Manoaan flotilla, that, having successfully landed the young Prince Walter's troops, now laid siege to the water front, gun answering gun, musketry answering musketry. A cry of alarm arose from the multitude; and there was a hurried

consultation among the Inquisitors, the viceroy and the chief officials. The situation was made more alarming by the marching of troops across the market-place and the increasing clamour of the battle without. Amidst the din the viceroy arose and came to the front of the scaffold, to address the people. He was heard with difficulty; but those nearest him repeated what he had said to others, and the sense and meaning of his speech was soon well understood.

"The profane shouts and noise that disturb the sacred and holy scene of judgment is the outbreak of mad rage and passion of the infidel allies and accomplices of this traitorous priest, and these two witches, whom the Holy Mother of God has placed in our hands for judgment. To the fire with them!"

"Yes! To the fire!" shouted some; and "Mercy for the priest!" cried many, being emboldened by the sound of other voices.

On the instant, however, the prisoners were seized by the executioners; and, with unholy speed, clamped with chains to the three stakes set apart for them, the faggots already half piled for the sacrifice; the hideous pyres being speedily completed, faggot upon faggot packed around the victims, and simultaneously lighted. The only sign the Queen made was to take from her finger a ring, which she held up towards the sun, that shone radiantly upon her sweet face. As the fire mounted towards her waist, and then began to lick the hideous Benito into tinder, she raised and kissed the love relic; and, almost immediately, disappeared in the flames. The priestess died without seeming to feel the slightest hurt, her face turned to the sun; but the priest of the Lysons died hard. The faggots about his devoted feet were less inflammable than the others. It had been so designed, to add torture to his execution. He cried to God, not for mercy upon his

persecutors, as most martyrs do, but for vengeance upon them. "Woe unto you," he cried, "Pharisees! backsliders!" and then, dropping sacred metaphor, he shrieked, "seducers! murderers! Your time shall come, and your end shall be a hell upon earth and a hell hereafter! O God, have mercy on me, a sinner!"

As if he had been able to call down the judgment of heaven straightway, the flames had barely smothered the priest's voice, than there entered the market-place such a wild rabble of dusky warriors, Indians and Manoans, under Prince Walter's chieftains, cutting down and trampling on retreating Spaniards, that it seemed as if hell itself might have been let loose. Right and left, they fell upon the multitude, climbing the scaffold with yells and execrations. As fast as the people who could get free made for the exits of the market-place, they fell upon the swords and spears of the cordon of troops that David had drawn about the place of sacrifice and murder; while he, with twenty followers, his face wet with perspiration, his throat dry with anxiety, ransacked halls and chapels, cells and dungeons, for his Queen and the priestess. Releasing on his way many a prisoner, including several of the English sailors who had been condemned, he struck down many a stalwart guard; and presently, remounting his horse, spurred into the market-place, in the thick of the massacre; for it was little else, though the people fought, and the viceroy and the Chief Justice wore swords and knew how to use them.

"Halt!" shouted David, in the Indian tongue. "Halt!"

There was an immediate shout of submission, and the carnage stopped.

Then David explained to his followers that he was about to demand what had happened to his Queen, Zarana Peluca, and the priestess, Adelenda Koomari, and the other prisoners, whose release he had demanded on promise of the withdrawal of his forces. If they were

all living, then Manoa should be content to take the city and govern it; but if they were dead, then would he give up the vile settlement and all its belongings as a booty and a vengeance, without quarter, to be burnt, that the souls of the martyrs might ascend to heaven by the torch-light of the city of a cruel, adulterous and blasphemous priesthood.

The conquering troops raised their swords and lances aloft, and uttered their several cries of "Agreed!" "'Tis just!" "The King hath spoken!"

Then David, reining his horse in front of the scaffold, demanded the chief authority, that he should stand forth; and the viceroy said: "I am he."

"By strategy and murder, you carried off from the city of Manoa two ladies, the Queen and a priestess of the sacred grove. Where are they?"

"I committed no strategy, I abducted no women," said the viceroy.

"You are the chief here. I am the chief there. My people obey my orders. Your people obey yours. Oh! I know you and your perfidy. Speak, or, by the gods, I'll have you cut down where you stand."

"Speak! Oh, speak!" cried such of the trembling friars and other officials who had not already succumbed to the terrible onslaught of the avengers.

"Two prisoners of war were brought here—women," said the viceroy.

"Yes, yes! Go on, man! Where are they? What has become of them?"

"They were tried for heresy."

"Tried? By the Inquisition?"

"The same."

"Well, they are alive, eh? But racked—only racked—alive?" exclaimed David, beside himself with anxiety and terror.

"Tell him," said the viceroy, addressing the Chief Justice.

"Signor," said the Chief Justice, "we cry you mercy ; and yet we have but carried out the laws established for the government of the city and the Church, by the authority of——"

"Stop your damnable apologies ! What have you done with your prisoners ?" Then, turning to an officer by his side, he said : "Seize me this vile ruffian, and bring him hither."

A brawny warrior rushed upon the scaffold, and hauled the Chief Justice to the feet of the Inca.

"Tell me, ere I have thy vile throat cut from ear to ear, where are the women—my Queen and her priestess sister ?"

"Yonder," said the Chief Justice, pointing to the burning pyres.

"By God ! 'Tis as I dreamed ! Burning, while we were on the threshold ! Oh ! my God, I thank Thee that Thou hast taken to Thyself my beloved son, ere he should have had to bear such sorrow as this !" And, letting fall his sword, he buried his face in his hands and wept.

His troopers murmured ; and the witch, Rebecca, pressed forward and touched the heel of his boot. Presently he looked down and beheld her.

She said : "For a truth, Master David Yarcombe, she is dead. And I did tend her to the last."

"Woman, who are you ?" he asked ; his voice trembling, his face haggard.

"She who kept house for Anthony Kennock."

"Speak, then ; tell me all."

But the murmuring of his people interrupting her, David turned to them, and said, in their tongue, "Have patience yet a little while, and ye shall be satisfied. This woman

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I know. She speaks my old language, and knows what I desire to learn. Well?"

"She wore upon her finger a ring thou hadst given her. There was a priest who knew thee in London, at the Lysons'. He saw the ring, and made opportunity to converse with the lady. He told her he knew and loved thee; and that a holy sister had given thee the ring, for thy wife, when thou shouldst marry. And for this, he being contumacious, they burnt him; yonder are his ashes, smouldering. The pyre on his right hand is that of thy wife; that on the left the pyre of the woman they called a priestess."

"Is this so?" David asked, turning to the Chief Justice, who still stood at his side, clutching his stirrup.

"'Tis so, indeed," he said.

David rode to the three pyres, the smoke of which still ascended to the sky; and after a few moments of meditation he turned to the woman and asked her for his wife's last words.

"There were no last words," she said, "except from the priest who was fain to live even while the faggots burnt, and he cursed like unto any pagan, and called down the vengeance of God upon his murderers and theirs, and died proclaiming for them the punishment of hell!"

"Then so be it!" David exclaimed.

And as he said so, there was a sudden outburst of battle in the great street north of the market-place. A body of Spaniards had rallied, and were being led against the Indians; while the Manoans, having been held in check so long, had permitted another body of Spaniards to re-form and attack.

And David was glad; for it stirred his blood at a moment when he was inclined to fling himself upon the ground and die of despair, bereft of a son whom he loved almost as well as the sweet wife that bore him. As fate

would have it, Prince Walter had fallen almost as Sir Walter's only son had fallen, while gallantly leading the assault. But that David had carried him in his arms to the boat ordered back to Manoa to deposit the body of the Prince in the royal tomb, and that of the murdered messenger in a place of honour, he might perchance have been in time to have saved the prisoners.

While he sat his horse for a few moments in this meditative and irresolute mood, an Indian chief touched his arm and whispered, "Oh, Inca! Grief to-morrow; the battle to-day."

Thereupon, he put spurs to his horse, and led his royal guard into the thick of it; and great was the slaughter.

It was at sunrise when the devilish ceremony of judgment had begun; so that it was barely noon when the Manoans broke their way into the city, and from the moment that the chieftain whispered into David's ear: "Grief to-morrow; the battle to-day," the bloody work went on, even unto the going down of the sun; and when the moon rose, Guayana Vieja was in flames, and the doom prayed for by the priest of the Lysons was fulfilled. The Indians, let loose upon the corrupt men in power, the false and cruel justices, the haughty officials, the bloody executioners, massacred them to a man. Rebecca flung herself from the ramparts, to escape the axe of a Topiawari chief who knew her for a witch, and she was drowned among the many Spaniards who fell in the river fighting, and became food for the amphibious beasts that infested the lower banks of the Caroni.

Book VI

PEACE

CHAPTER I

HOMEWARD BOUND

DESPITE her sacrifices of "Lutheran dogs" and the two fair women of Manoa, the Church failed to secure sufficient aid from heaven to protect the city or its people. Manoa and the Indians wreaked a terrible vengeance upon the Spanish settlement. The Spaniards in their dealings with the native races whom they had conquered had set them a bitter example. David found himself powerless to stay their hands. They plundered never a shrine, nor carried off a single trophy; but they slew without regard of sex, and at last, obeying the trumpet calls of the Manoan chiefs and the signals of the Indian leaders, they fired the city, thus lighting a pyre the embers of which may be said to illuminate the pages of history to this day.

By the light of this flaming torch, David, wounded in mind, body, and soul, saw the remains of his son carefully wrapped in llama cloth and covered with the brocaded banner of his favourite troop, guarded by trusted sentinels, and dispatched, with full instructions for burial in the sacred tombs of the Incas; and with loving messages to Ikkaraka and his people, and a tender farewell.

The White King of Manoa

"My mission is fulfilled," he said, "lest it please God to send me once more to the city of the first garden, in company with my great chief, the Raleigh of whom I have often spoken unto you. If it should please the gods to once more place the destiny of Manoa and Guiana in my hands, then will I return unto you, with a mighty force, that shall confirm an alliance between my sovereign and my God and your sovereign and your god, and shall make you joint masters of the world. If otherwise it be God's will to take me hence to His own kingdom, or to give me a few years for meditation and reflection in my own country, then do we part, until we meet again, such as are worthy, in the golden city of heaven itself."

Chiefs and soldiers, Indians and Manoans, prostrated themselves, and David took his leave. He embarked in his own galley, with a sufficient force for its defence, and made his way to the Gulf of Paria, where he had heard of a small fleet of English ships that had put in from stress of weather and were, happily, capable of resisting any treacherous or open attack of the Spaniards.

"It may be that I come back to you," he said at parting. "As I came to you, without premeditation, so do I leave you. The personal ties that bound me, my wife, your beloved Queen, and my son, your beloved Prince, are broken. It has pleased God. My heart will ever be with you. But, for yet awhile, my fate seems to call me hence. I go to report myself to those who sent me; to give an account of the golden city of Manoa, the courage and nobility of its people; and, perchance, to return, with an escort that shall sweep Spain for ever from the seas. In the meantime I leave you, and Manoa and Guiana, in strong, wise hands. Love one another; respect your women; obey the laws of the Inca and his Council; keep your weapons as bright as your honour, and both at the service of the State; raise a monumental

shaft to the memory of Queen Zarana Peluca and Prince Walter, the son of David, the Inca; hold me in your heart of hearts, as I you; remember me in your prayers And so, God be with you; and farewell!"

The galley pulled off, and was presently swinging at a great pace down the Capiarai river, to join the flotilla that was now moored off the Spanish settlement of Caiamao, where the Manoans and their Indian allies held a solemn feast of victory and thanksgiving, their joy tempered with a touching resignation, that counted its triumphs dearly bought with the losses of brave chiefs and comrades.

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With a haughty gesture David waved aside the attentions of the crew, and watched the Manoan galley as it disappeared behind a screen of tropical foliage. Then, turning with a sigh, he gazed through his tears upon the scene immediately around him.

The English sailors had received David from the galley with an amused curiosity. They did not know what to make of him, or the dark olive-skinned oarsmen and warriors whom he had commanded. They had seen plenty of Indians; but Manoa was to them, as it was to Trevelion and Raleigh's best friends, a mythical country. The captain remarked to his sailing-master that the beggars looked like a superior race of Peruvians, lighter in colour, more graceful of build; but who the devil was this white chief, with his fantastic costume, his regal manner, and his long, acute features? . . . It was not, however, unusual in those days for Englishmen to get themselves up in strange costumes. Officers' uniforms, for example, were not introduced into the Navy until 1748; and it was not until after the Crimean war that the men had a regulation dress. In our greatest naval victories, including the battle of Trafalgar, our men fought in curiously varied attire. One of the most picturesque figures in Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter"

is the English mariner fresh from the Spanish Main ; and the adventurers, in Millais' famous picture of "The Boyhood of Walter Raleigh," are sailors, who owe their costume to their own fancy and to no official order or ship's regulations. It will, therefore, be understood that it was not alone David's remarkable dress that excited curiosity, but his personality and manner, his regal air, the boat that had hailed them, the palaver, partly in Indian, partly in Spanish and English, in which it was agreed to take the strange chief on board as a passenger, the splendour of the equipment of the galley and the striking costumes of the rowers and guards, with their muskets, lances, and swords, not to mention the culverin in the bow, something entirely novel outside an English or a Spanish vessel. The whole thing was to them a sudden revelation of the possibilities that lurked far away behind the forests and mountains, in the dim distance, where enterprising mariners vowed the New World was thick with mighty cities and treasure-houses of gold and silver. . . . But hardly had the galley disappeared than the captain and his wondering crew found themselves stirred by other motives than those of mere curiosity.

"The poor devil has swooned !" exclaimed the captain, catching David in his arms. "Lend a hand here."

They laid him aft, upon a deck-hammock of dried palm leaves. The captain, his arm under the passenger's head, managed to pour a few drops of brandy down his throat ; and, while calling for the ship's doctor, removed the fighting crown of Manoa from the sufferer's head, the thin gold breastplate and jewelled belt and sword from his body.

"Mercy on him !" exclaimed the captain, "he's wounded ! How, in God's name, he could have walked—his boots are full of blood !"

Ripping the lower leather of David's right boot with his

knife, so that it might the more easily be slipped off, the leech appearing, they discovered an ugly wound, not near the ankle, as they expected, but in the fleshy part of the leg. It was almost dry. "As if," remarked the captain, "there was no more blood left in his body; his face is as grey as a sailcloth, his lips like the dead."

Prising open the man's teeth, with the haft of a jack-knife the doctor was slowly pouring brandy down his throat, and begging the bystanders to give him air; whereupon a youngster, rushing below, returned with a palm leaf. The captain smiled upon the lad, and, taking the natural fan, plied it gently over David's face.

The chiefs and comrades of the Inca David might well be forgiven for not having observed that their King was wounded, for he was not singular in carrying upon his person the red badges of the hot work in which they had been engaged.

By the captain's orders David was removed to a berth, undressed, and put into clean sheets; for it was a well-found ship, and the captain was something of a sybarite in the way of luxuries, and had a good wife at Plymouth who loved him well.

When David "came to," he was in a fever. The leech was surprised, not to say aggrieved, at this; seeing, according to his theory, that David's loss of blood should have protected him from such an attack. Indeed, the leech was disappointed that he had had no excuse for the use of the lancet, with which instrument he was ready to attack every malady. David would probably have died on his hands, as it was, but for the overbearing and masterful disposition of the captain, who insisted on giving him frequent spoonfuls of the gravy of stewed meat, varied with biscuit sopped in wine. He was a very masterful and egotistical commander, this Captain Harry Hawkins, a relative of the famous Hawkins, and therefore

inspired with something of a noble obstinacy of character. Moreover, the doctor, be it said to his credit, had a useful compound of drugs and simples, that he invariably used to keep life in the bodies of those whom he had weakened by blood-letting. Between the two, the marine egoist being to the fore, they managed to save the life of their passenger, though they despaired of altogether restoring his wits, which he had either lost before or after he came aboard, the which they could not satisfactorily resolve themselves.

It was many weeks before David was well enough to sit up. They had shaved his head, but his hair was beginning to grow again, and his beard and moustache had become grey, the moustache with a tendency to curl like that of a Spanish hidalgo.

When he was strong enough to be carried on deck, the captain ordered that he should be rigged out in a suit of his own best; David's costume, and its bizarre crown and accoutrements, having been stowed away, with other curious baggage that had been handed up from his galley.

David looked hardly less remarkable in the captain's clothes than in his kingly costume. Taller than most of the men around him, he stooped from weakness; but there was great dignity in his manner. As he gazed upon the sea a momentary expression of pleasure lighted up his features. Then, with a sigh, he watched the white track that the good ship was making under full sail.

"Dear friend, what ship?" he presently asked.

"*'The Fair Maid of Devon,'*" said the doctor.

"*'The Fair Maid of Devon!'*" David repeated, with a curious accent.

"You are an Englishman?"

"I have lost my memory," David replied; halting, as a foreigner might, in doubt of his words.

"Lost your memory?" said the doctor. "'Twill come back. By all the known principles of medical practice and the diminished temperature of the blood, thou shouldst have been dead. Believe me, thy recovery is little else but a resurrection. Shalt have thy memory, as well as thy life, back again, all in good time."

David only answered with a look of inquiry; and the doctor slowly repeated what he had said, pausing between each word.

Then David smiled, and spoke in the Indian tongue; adding, "I am not myself; I thank you, sir."

"Nay; thank me not that thou art not thyself," said the doctor, laughing; "thank me and the captain that thou art alive, and wilt be thyself anon."

"Thank you, sir," said David.

"And I thank you, my friend," said the doctor, "for a new experience in a difficult profession."

Then David looked up inquiringly; gazed about him; smiled in a mystified way at the boatswain, who was piping hands for some business in the shrouds; and at length sat down, his face in his hands, as if trying to control his feelings or to task his memory.

"I have lost my memory," he repeated; looking helplessly at the leech.

"'Twill come back, I tell thee. Yonder is the captain beckoning us. A cup of sack and a biscuit shall help to jog thy memory. Come, friend, come."

David leaned on the proffered arm, and suddenly he seemed to hear once familiar voices and long-forgotten music; it was one of the sailors playing a fiddle. The tune was "When the Hunt is Up"; and the brain turned a slide in memory's lantern, and David was at Littleham. He heeded no further the remarks of the doctor; went down the companion ladder mechanically; sat in the captain's cabin; but was still at Littleham, to the

accompaniment of the sailor's fiddle. When the music stopped, he smiled ; and, turning to the leech, said, " I believe, indeed, 'twill come back."

And so it did, in part. He might have been himself a figure in some strange dream, as he sat, day after day, on deck, watching the race between sea and clouds, the spouting of whales, the sport of dolphins, and listened to the music of the ship's company, with their hautboys and fiddles on calm evenings, and the whistle of the boatswain or sailing-master, competing with the wind among the rigging. He talked to himself in foreign tongues, and occasionally mixed the languages of the Indies and Manoa with his English ; but neither doctor nor captain ever learned from him whither he had been or whither he was going. They might well regard him as something uncanny in the way of mariners. He had long since convinced them that he knew how to sail a ship ; and he had made, now and then, a pertinent remark touching sea-fights and adventurous landings for the attack of foreign cities. He looked prematurely old, as indeed he was. A long, bony face, sunken cheeks, many wrinkles about the eyes, and deep diagonal lines in the forehead above the bridge of the nose, indicating a habit of concentrated thought ; above them a scar that must have threatened his life when it was green, a thick grey beard, and a moustache that disguised the fine lines of his mouth—a very remarkable figure, tall, and at times agile and alert, at other times bending, as if with the depression of an overwrought mind.

CHAPTER II

TOO TRUE NOT TO BE STRANGE

AND so he dreamed himself back to the world, which met him half-way in the conversation of the captain and his crew; until, at last, they anchored at Plymouth; but the final destination of the ship was the port of London, and eventually they landed their passenger in the Thames.

Then he raised his head and breathed afresh, and forgot Guiana and Manoa, and his Princess-wife and son, and the *auto da fé* and all the rest of his strange and pathetic experiences, as it were a dream. Life is a dream within a dream; and, after all, in his case it was only from one dream to another, and for the time being he hoped to continue that other one where he had left it, when he had set out for Plymouth twenty odd years back, to sail with Raleigh for the conquest of Manoa. How it all recurred to him now: the parting in London with Mary Lysons, the business of loading the ships, the bustle of the Thames, the long talks with Raleigh, and the anchoring off Plymouth, to receive Lady Raleigh, Lucy Withycombe, her father and his own father, and old Liberty Dent, the former dear ones as guests of an hour, Dent as a fellow-voyager! The remembrance of the touch of Lucy's hand thrilled him even now, and the delirium of her parting kiss, chilled by the shadowing of the green-eyed monster; all of which he experienced afresh as he followed his poor belongings ashore, his heart beating to be off at once to Durham House.

He had no money, nor the merest example of the pearl-treasures of his deserted empire ; nothing of value, but his barbaric crown, his gold plate, his gold cuirass with its copper milling, and a jewelled sword, with a blade of tempered steel that might have matched the finest Toledo ever fashioned by the hand of man. He had pressed this upon the captain, as some small return for his passage and the kindness he had received. But neither the captain nor any of his crew would take anything from the fugitive. They had spoils of their own aboard, the plunder of a Spanish ship, that was carrying a secret store of gold and silver, besides its supposed cargo of more or less ordinary produce of the islands ; and, apart from a feeling of generous sympathy for their strange passenger, they half feared to meddle with his Imperial relics, which the captain told him he could sell to advantage and fill his empty purse. Moreover, on a carefully penned sheet of paper he gave him an address where he would be sure of honest treatment. David went thither straightway, and exchanged his royal uniform, crown, sword, and all, for current coin of the realm ; and when he examined the new gold pieces, lo and behold, they were not stamped with the brave head of Elizabeth Regina, but with the smug features of James I., and they bore dates from 1604 to 1619. With a sigh and a wondering look of inquiry, he asked the goldsmith and dealer the meaning of these tokens.

"Tokens, my friend?" said the dealer. "Current coin, not so long minted. You have been many years beyond the seas?"

"It is true," said David.

"You wear the dress of a London mariner, I should guess, of no late date ; though, pardon me for saying you have the face and manners of a remote country."

"You have the prescience of a man of learning and observation," said David ; his native language, with a certain

culture that belonged to his early training, coming back to him.

The goldsmith bowed, and smiled his acknowledgment of the stranger's tribute to his wisdom.

"I have intercourse with many famous people, and know our greatest travellers."

"The captain, whose letter I brought you, gave me these clothes. I have been long away from England."

"Almost an entire reign, if not more," remarked the dealer.

"I am an old man, you think?"

"Yes."

"Too old?"

"For what?"

"The reign of Elizabeth?"

"Marry, yes, friend; by a score of years!"

David staggered against the heavy oaken counter of the goldsmith's shop.

"Pray be seated, sir," said the tradesman, coming to his assistance, and placing a chair for him.

"I thank you," said David; thrusting the gold pieces he had been examining into his breeches pocket.

"Nay, you are welcome, sir."

"Tell me, kind friend," said David, "what year is this?"

"Sixteen hundred and twenty-one; February the 16th."

"Five-and-twenty years," said David to himself.

"Since you left England?" queried the tradesman.

"And the Queen?" said David; "she is no more?"

"Died March the twenty-fifth, in the year of our Lord sixteen hundred and three."

"Sixteen hundred and three!" David repeated, and for a moment seemed to be counting his fingers. His heart was beating with a sensation it had not known since Lucy Withycombe threw herself into his arms in that other

dream of his, and he encountered Anthony Kennoek, face to face, and blade to blade.

"And Sir Walter Raleigh?" he asked presently; his eyes, for the first time, eagerly looking into the dealer's.

"Ah! That's a sorrowful story."

"Is it?"

"And, between you and me, a scandalous one. I may not say how scandalous, lest I run my head into the same danger. But London loved him."

"London!" said David, to himself, though he spoke aloud. "I worshipped him."

"A great and noble citizen, sir, that same Sir Walter; a scholar, a statesman, a——"

"Yes, yes!" said David, with a beaming note of interrogation in his eyes. "What of him, what of him?"

"Have patience, dear sir," said the dealer; his first fears that his visitor was a madman now intensified with a doubt as to his harmlessness.

"Yes; of course, one need not hurry to meet ill news."

"You are a true philosopher."

"I am a poor creature."

"Gad's life! I deny it, dear sir. But when a man has been far away from his country for many years——"

"He naturally desires to hear of his friends. You say Sir Walter Raleigh——Don't fear me, friend. . . . I am a sane man; we are all dreamers."

"It is only something of a year that Sir Walter Raleigh was brought to the block at Westminster."

"The block?"

"He made as gallant an end as his career was brave and true."

"He is dead?"

"And buried. God rest his soul!"

"Amen!" said David; and, covering his face with his hands, he wept convulsively, the first tears he had shed

time out of mind, for he could not weep in the glow of that hateful pyre that had robbed him of wife and son in the cruel city of Guayana Vieja.

"Dear sir," said the tradesman, "I grieve with you. But I fear me you are sick; let me conduct you within, and offer you a glass of canary; I have a rare bottle, 'twill revive you."

"I thank you, sir," said David, the tears trickling down his cheeks; "but I think I will go on my way."

"Which is your way, may I ask?"

"To the west—to Devonshire. I shall get a ship in the river bound for Exmouth or Topsham, I doubt not."

"First do me the honour to accept my poor hospitality," said the dealer, at the same time turning away to open a door and call to his wife: "Lucy, my love, we have a guest."

"Lucy, did you say? Lucy?"

"Yes? that is my wife's name: daughter to Master Wentworth the great hosier of Cheapside."

"It is a pretty name."

"Wentworth?"

"Lucy," said David; rising, as he spoke, to receive the lady of the house.

"This way, sir," she said.

David followed her into an oak-panelled parlour, decorated with many relics of foreign countries, matchlocks, arquebuses, armour, and a flag or two, mostly Spanish.

"Gifts from friends," said the dealer, answering David's silent inquiry.

"Sir Walter hated the Spaniards; I doubt not he hath many relics of his victories."

It seemed to the dealer as if his guest had already forgotten that Sir Walter was dead.

"He had, be sure, in the keeping of his wife, a sweet dear lady."

"She is not——?"

"God be thanked, no!" said the dealer, anticipating the question. "She lives to honour his memory, and may still survive to see it redeemed from the shadow of a suspicion."

"King James is a Scotchman?"

"Hush! dear sir. Walls have ears."

"And a Papist," went on David. "But he is King of England, you say?"

"Of a surety."

"And Sir Walter Raleigh?"

"Philip of Spain hated him, and James coveted the friendship of Spain; but, forgive me, pray let that flea stick by the wall, lest we be accused of speaking treason, which is as bad before the judges as taking up arms, and——"

"Now, sir," said the dealer's wife, placing part of a cold round of beef upon the table, with bread and horse-radish, and two silver beakers with a bottle of wine.

"I thank you, madam," as she curtsied herself from the room.

"'Tis a remarkable headgear you have exchanged with me for those aforesaid gold pieces, sir; and hath a pretty story, without doubting."

"He was a king that wore it," said David, "and I knew him well in the years gone by. Perhaps it is all a dream. I could fain hope so. She was more like a vision, that was his wife. He was a prince that was her son. And they are, surely, such as dreams are made of. . . . I would e'en forget them; or only remember them as last I saw them, before their dreams were ended: he, bravely and gallantly equipped for war; she an angel-forecast of what she is now in the courts of the sun, or in that other Heaven you and I believe in. . . . I have no relic of her or him; and, bethinking me now, I would have thee let me have again that poor emblem of a strange majesty.

And yet! . . . Nay, dear friend, I would have thee keep it. . . . For that barbaric monarch, who wore it, is dead; and I would strive to forget him, except in such dream-like reverie as belongs to passages in our lives that are in the nature of our heart's secrets. . . . And you said Sir Walter Raleigh is dead, and that 'twas Spain that did destroy him! . . . Then, why should he live, who did wait and watch for him until he had forgotten what he was like, and the language he spoke and the dreams he dreamed, until Durham House and the Mitre, and the Court and all were something belonging to a fairy tale; as 'tis now with the El Dorado he did seek; and as, pray God, it may all be so, save and except the village where he was a lad and happy, and the rivers upon which he sailed his boat and dreamed the most beautiful dream of all!"

It seemed to the merchant that his guest had forgotten him, and was holding converse with himself. And it was so. After a while, David gazed upon him with an anxious, inquiring look, and asked what place he was in, at what place, where, what city, and to whom he had the honour of speaking.

"Alas, good friend," said the merchant, "I fear me you are not well. 'Twere best you stay and rest for the night, and take counsel with a doctor; you have over-wrought your strength, and——"

"I thank you, sir," said David; "and the captain likewise. 'Tis good to have patience with one who is so distraight. But I will take my leave, and so wish you good fortune."

"Nay; and I will be your escort to the vessel you hope to find."

"Bound for Topsham, or Exmouth, or both," said David, as if by sudden inspiration. "I thank you. I have slept too long, and am not yet quite wakened; but I know you, sir, and your wine has refreshed me. And they are dead,

the friends I loved ! . . . All but one, perchance. . . . Your wife's name is Lucy. You see, I do remember. Come, then, since you are so benevolently disposed. We shall find the road together ; I have made good the trend of many more unusual roads. But I would buy me other apparel by the way."

"'Tis but a stone's throw to my neighbour, the tailor of Cheape ; but I will call a coach."

David had not ridden in a coach for nigh upon five-and-twenty years ; and yet it seemed to him, as he gazed upon the bustle of the London streets, as if the clock had been put back, or that he was, in very truth, still on a visit to Durham House, a fancy that was grimly dissipated when he caught sight of his face in the tailor's mirror of East-cheape.

It was sunset when the kindly merchant convoyed him on board the *Mary and John* bound for Topsham.

CHAPTER III

▲ WOMAN'S CONSTANCY

MARCH had blown itself into April, and April had sprinkled the country with flowers, when the *Mary and John's* boat landed David at the stairs of the Mermaid at Exmouth.

There it was, the same old house ; a trifle more wooden in appearance, with the same old need of paint, but with its creepers holding the timbers together and putting forth new buds to hide the many cracks and crevices.

Typical of the place, and confirming David in the distance of time between the days when he knew Exmouth and this day when Exmouth had long since forgotten him, Hiliary Sharp sat in the porch of the old inn, a human landmark on Time's highway, that marked nothing except its own decay. He sat in the sun, his face almost as white as his hair, his two hands shaking with a gentle tremor that afflicted his entire frame, even to his lips, and without a spark of intelligence in his voice.

"He be very old, and paralytic, Master Sharp," they said ; "and mistress, she be laid in her grave long since."

"Do the Blatchfords still live at the Manor House?" David asked.

"The Blatchfords?" said Sharp's son, who had not been born when David last stood upon the Mermaid's steps. "There be no Manor House as I knows on," the young man continued. "I've heard father talk of Justice,

Blatchford; but 'twas of things before I come into the world, and the Manor House was burnt, I've heard say, by the rioters."

"Do you know the King's Head, at Littleham?" David asked.

"Oh yes; and Master Sutton and the good dame; they comes once in a whiles to see father."

"Your father is Master Sharp, that sits here in the porch?"

"So they do say," the lad replied, with a chuckle; "and I do believe 'un. Poor old dad! He ain't been hisself for many a long year; though he bain't so old, not more'n eighty. It come on what they do call creeping paralyses; and it do go on creeping, mighty slow, but sure; and will to the end."

"Can you put a horse into something, and take my chest to the King's Head at Littleham," asked David, "while I have a bit of food?"

"Why, surely," the young man replied. "There be father's cart, with a comfortable seat, and——"

"I will walk," said David. "Let me have a bottle of your best, and whatever there may be, a bite, in the larder; sit down with me, if you will be so good; and then I'll follow my cargo. What do you say to that?"

"I am yours to command, sir; and as for the wine, I'll warrant mun never tasted better."

Presently, David and his young host were sitting down to a meat pasty, a leg of pork, and a salad of spring vegetables and herbs, the perfume of which was as sweet as that of the box of gillyflowers outside the open window.

"Let me lend mun father's old staff," said young Sharp, when David set forth to walk to Littleham.

"You are very kind," said David.

And as the young man watched him, making his way up the hill from the beach, he said: "Them as lives by

the sea, or serves the mariners ashore, sees queer folk. He looks as if he'd seen sea-serpents and mermaidens, and was afeared they was still a-comin' after mun."

But it was nothing coming after him that made David fearful; it was that which might be in front of him; for he was not only on his way to the King's Head, at Littleham, but to the old churchyard.

The mild April air wooed him with pleasant messages from the sea, mingled with the scent of meadows and the music of sheep-bells. He paused now and then to lean against a gate, and once or twice to gather a few primroses and violets in sheltered corners of the way, and to note how alive everything was with hope and promise, and to listen to blackbird and thrush, to linnet and redbreast, with a strange sense of familiarity. He knew every sound and every bird, and Manoa became more and more a dream.

"Am I quite well?" said old Tom Sutton, answering David's commonplace question. "I do hope so, master, for a man of seventy, that my missus says doan't look an hour over fifty—God bless her! Ah! here you be, missus. I was a-tellin' the gentleman what a happy couple we be, though we'en been spliced these fifty year!"

"Surely, surely!" said the dame, in her white cross-over and woollen gown, her eyes as bright as when she was thirty. "And why not? I've put a light to the logs in the gentleman's chamber; not that it is cauld, but there ain't been a fire for many a long month, and the nights be damp, though the days be just summer; never see so soft an April."

They made their guest a tankard of hot ale of their own brewing, and gave him a pipe. It was a long walk for an old man, they said, from Exmouth to Littleham; a remark that made David's heart sink.

"And how old would you take me to be?" he asked, lighting his pipe, and stretching his legs into the fire-light—for in the King's Head kitchen they rarely let out the fire

from one year's end to the other, and the smell of the wood embers scented the patch of valley that separated it from the hedgerow and the garden on the other side of the road; said hedgerow and garden being the appurtenances and belongings of the Withycombe farmhouse.

"Well, if your honour was a woman," said Sutton, "I should say forty out of compliment; but since men be above such flatteries, I should put you down at sixty."

"Good Lord! And would you?" David replied.

"To be honest, I would, indeed."

"May I ask who lives in the pretty old house on the other side of the road?" asked David after a while, his heart beating with apprehension.

"Why, that's the Withycombe homestead; not a handsomer in all Devon, nor a fairer mistress."

"And who may she be?"

"Dame Withycombe."

"*Dame Withycombe!*" David repeated, with emphasis on the "*Dame.*"

"Your wits be nimble," the landlord replied, laughing.

"You've seen her. We was wont to call her Mistress Lucy; but, the old people being long dead, and she having arrived at what they calls years of discretion, and being mistress of the homestead, and a good stretch of land goes with it, and allowing for the dignity of her state, we calls her Dame. But, Lord bless you, she be young as ever she was at heart, and—— But you've seen her, else you would not have taken me up?"

David shirked the veiled question, and refilled his pipe and complimented the tobacco.

"'Twas a gift that 'golden weed,' as my old friend do call it, he who gave it me; and I rarely have had a nobler gift. 'Twas from Master Sidmouth Trevelion."

"Indeed! Then God be praised!" said David. "At least, he is alive?"

"Grand Old Sid, alive! I should say so, and mun's like to live a hundred and fifty years. He be seventy-five, if he be a day, and looks no more than forty; though badly lamed, and goes about with sticks. But, Lord, he preaches like a big male angel. He be a hater of earthly kings, be Master Trevelion; though, mind you, it don't do to say much about such affairs, even here at Littleham. One as keeps the King's Head have no business with politics."

"And where is Master Trevelion in these days?" asked David, his mind for a minute or two adrift from the Tudor house of the Withycombes.

"He lives at Topsham, just down by the quay; it's his own house, and the land to it, and in mun's front garden there be his flagstaff, rigged like the mast of a three-decker, and two guns, one each side the path; and open house to all sorts and conditions; and, barring his Scripture texts and his visions of the New Jerusalem, not a jollier soul in all the west country!"

* * * * *

The next day was Sunday. David went to church. If he had desired to unmask himself, he would have shaven off his moustache and beard. They were grey and bushy, and, as Littleham had never seen him in such disguise (he was a beardless boy when he left the *Exe*), and had long since regarded him as dead and buried, or devoured by alligators in the Orinoco River (if ever there was such a river, which Littleham doubted, regarding it as part of the mad romance of Raleigh's imagination), it was not likely that any one should recognise him, not even Lucy. And yet he knew her at once; and, when he knelt at the bidding, "Let us pray," the tears came into his eyes, and he did not know whether they were tears of joy or sorrow.

The landlord of the King's Head had not overestimated

her appearance of young-womanhood. She was, after all, but a year or two over forty, and many a woman is in her prime at that age, as Lucy was, with the elastic step of thirty, and the pink and white complexion of a Devonshire beauty. Time had only emphasised her charms and given a healthful rotundity to her figure, while it had left her face and neck without a wrinkle, except such trifling indications of a crow's-foot or two about the eyes that added to their genial expression. She sailed into church, in her best brocaded gown and ample hat and feathers, high-heeled shoes and buckles, her brown curls about her forehead; and with an air of the country refined by the town, that made her, by comparison to the rest of the womenfolk, quite a grand dame. She always liked a bit of finery; and having been presented at Court, and now living retired on her own property, with a sufficient income to play the part of My Lady Bountiful, no one questioned her right to take her place with the best in the county.

She observed David, as she passed him in the churchyard, some time after service; for he was wandering among the graves, and she had paused to lay a flower upon the resting-place of her father and mother. David looked wistfully at her; but she never for a moment imagined that he was in any way associated with her life or hopes. He had found his father's grave, and was standing at its head. She turned to glance at him, as she closed the low gate of the churchyard, and disappeared down the path into the roadway.

* * * * *

It was not until many days had passed that David made up his mind to call upon Lucy. He had watched her, whenever she had crossed his path. The landlord told him that she had asked him what strange gentleman was edging with him.

"And what did you answer?"

"I told her I could not say; but that she had designated you correct, for that you were of a truth a gentleman, though you had travelled all the world over, and was evident a man of Devon."

"Thank you, Master Sutton, thank you," said David.

Many a time David had been on the point of inquiring about himself; but he was fearful of making himself known lest it might be impossible for him to remain, breathing the same air as Lucy and worshipping in the same church. He even refrained from visiting Trevelion, at Topsham. It seemed to him as if he had dreamed a strange dream, that he would now fain forget only to dream another and a final one that should give him rest at last among friends who belonged to the sweetest memories of his life, memories that now came back to him as fresh as if he were still a lad on his father's farm. While he forgot many things connected with his life in Manoa, and felt towards the siege of Guayana Vieja as if it had occurred hundreds of years ago and was an incident in the life of some one he had heard of, not himself, there was not an event, the most trifling, that he had forgotten concerning Exmouth or Littleham, up to his parting with Lucy at Plymouth. His adventures in London and his brief experiences of the Court were a little shadowy, but he remembered them and Mary Lysons, his jealousy of Lord Essex, and his cherished companionship with Raleigh; but it was Littleham and Exmouth that now crowded his memory. He could recall every article of furniture in the Littleham parlour, where he used to play the lute and sing to it, with Lucy and the rest taking part in the chorus. O God! why had he ever left that paradise? Why did not Providence let a man know when he was happiest?

One day, he was talking to the parson, when Lucy was passing along the little village street—that is, if it might

be called a street, that only had a few cottages, the vicarage, a farmhouse, a double row of straggling trees, and a beck, sparkling along the stony sidewalk—and, pausing for a moment to take the wall side of the way, the parson asked permission to introduce to her their new parishioner.

"For our visitor tells me he desires to settle among us for the remainder of his days; and I give him hearty welcome, as I am sure in your goodness you will, dear friend."

"Surely," said Lucy; remarking, as she turned towards David, "You have been sojourning in the village for a long time?"

"A few weeks," said David, his voice trembling. "I was something of an invalid."

"I feared you were not well on that first Sunday I noted you in church," said Lucy. "What name, did you say, sir?"

She asked the question, turning to the parson.

He looked towards David; who, hitherto, had been simply known as "the stranger."

"Prideaux," said David; "Martin Prideaux."

"Martin Prideaux!" Lucy repeated, with a blush. "It is an old Devonshire name."

"You know it?" said David, meeting her eyes; his own bright and piercing, hers with a dreamy expression of inquiry.

They were beautiful eyes. It seemed to David as if he had never known until now how beautiful they were. Had they become darker? They used to be blue. Now, they were a blue-black; and full of a new meaning, the sweet depth of a tender resignation, still with the hopeful expression of girlhood. David's eyes fell before her glance, and he was confused.

"Martin Prideaux," she said, addressing the parson,

but still looking at David, "was the ancestral name that Master David Yarcombe was proud of, poor dear fellow, and did mention with a brave assurance to our gracious Queen Elizabeth, of blessed memory."

"Is't so, indeed?" the clergyman answered.

"'Tis strange your name should be Martin Prideaux," she said, turning to David; and at that moment the clergyman was beckoned away by an old dame standing at her cottage door, her husband being very sick, and anxious to speak with him.

"We must look up our friend's pedigree, and make him one of us indeed," he said, as he excused himself and left David and Lucy by themselves.

"'Tis an unusual name, no doubt," said David, emboldened by her remembrance to speak of himself with more particularity. "Then you knew that same David Yarcombe?"

"Yes," she answered, with a sigh.

"Knew him well?" David continued.

"Man, man!" she replied. "You awaken very sad memories. But that you are a stranger, you might have known better. And yet, surely, you cannot have lived at the King's Head without——"

"Dear madam, forgive me," said David, his heart beating, between joy and sorrow. "But I myself knew David Yarcombe, as a comrade and fellow-adventurer."

"Then, dear sir, forgive me," she said, her face flushed with emotion. "Do me the pleasure to give me your arm. That is my house, in the meadows beyond the road."

The touch of her hand sent a thrill through him.

"My woman shall make a dish of tea, and you shall tell me, if you will be so kind, about—about—Da—vid—Yar—combe," she said; not attempting to control the emotion that had been awakened in her breast.

David was taller than Lucy ; and in his endeavour to appear at his best, he drew himself up to his full height, and bore the pressure of her arm unyielding, as if he had been a giant.

How the old time came over him ! He feared he might burst out with " My God ! Lucy, don't you know me ? Am I so old, so hideous, that you have forgotten the youngster who only desired to die for you, and who won the commendation of the greatest of feminine critics, for his fine figure and gallant appearance ? " But he kept a judicious silence ; though he hated himself for it, and he wished to heaven he had Old Trevelion by, that he might have the benefit of his advice.

" Yes, I knew him ; sailed in the same ship with him, was lost with him in the same river, God help me ! " said David, when, over the tea-table, Lucy had reopened the subject. " And his thoughts were continually at Littleham ; he never forgot his love for you."

Lucy burst into tears ; and then David inwardly cursed himself, for a brute and a fool.

" Nay, my dear friend," he exclaimed, rising from his seat, and tempted to take her hand ; " don't weep. Your lover is not dead. I can avouch it, for a surety."

Lucy seemed to have fainted, she turned so white, and did not speak.

" What shall I do ? Shall I call your woman ? " said David ; and the tones of his voice awoke her, with a start.

" No, no ! " she said, taking from her reticule a bottle of salts. " I shall be quite well in a few minutes. You have startled me."

" I am a blundering fool ! " said David.

" No, no. I thank you for startling me," she replied, and looked at him. " Your voice reminded me of his ; it carried me back five-and-twenty years in a moment. Oh ! sir, can it be that God is going to answer my prayers ? "

"You still love the poor fellow? Nay, forgive me for any question that may appear unseemly. I have his welfare at heart, selfishly at heart."

"You are very strange," she answered. "Yet, I feel as if I had known you. Martin Prideaux! Perhaps I met you in London, when I was a girl?"

"No doubt—no doubt. But tell me, if I may be so bold? Should David return—as I am assured he may,—will you forgive him all the sins he so often confessed to me?"

"What sins?"

"His jealousy of you; his interest in one Mary Lysons, who became a nun; his cold parting with you, when, if he had been true to himself and to you, he would have shown you his broken heart?"

"Forgive him!" she said, the tears streaming down her cheeks. "'Tis I that need forgiveness,—a frivolous creature, seeking the admiration of vain lords and popinjays, coquetting with my own happiness, like a fool!"

"And you have never married?"

"Married! There was only one man in the world I could have married."

David clutched the arm of his chair, to keep him steady and hold himself in his seat.

"But he, poor fellow! You must know, dear friend, that men are not as faithful to their loves as women. A sailor, they say, has a wife in every port. That was not true of David Yarcombe. But supposing it had been?"

"I know 'tis not true," she said. "Let us not deal in suppositions."

Full of an intention, at the moment, of telling her that David was a widower, he instantly, however, took his cue from the woman's faith in her lover; and there and then forgot (with a firm resolve never to darken Lucy's life with the shadow of Manoa) that he had ever been married, or

had ever had a son. It was not so very hard to do so, seeing how acute and keen were his early memories, how far back, into seeming dreamland, Manoa had retreated. It was, he felt, a wise instinct that had prompted him to keep no relic of his kingship, no memorial of his throne or his people—a veritable dream indeed, now, sitting in the Littleham parlour, with Elizabeth dead, Raleigh a martyred ghost, and England falling from her high estate, under a traitorous king.

"You would take the wanderer back to your heart, then, without question, without——"

"Man, man, you torture me! Let him come and ask me those questions himself."

"I am a brute!" said David, in a whirl of anxiety. "I will go and fetch him."

And straightway he left the house.

"My God! How changed I must be!" he said, as he sought his chamber at the King's Head. "But who would know me in this disguise of hair?" pulling at his beard.

Then he went to the head of the stairs, and called, "Sutton!"

"Yes, sir," said the landlord.

"Come here, Sutton."

"Yes, sir."

"Can you shave a man?"

"I shave myself every second day."

"Can you shave me?"

"No doubt, with the aid of a pair of scissors."

"Come on, then!" David replied, pulling off his coat.

Sutton bustled up, with a bowl of hot water, and was soon cutting away David's moustache and beard and lathering his chin and cheeks.

The result was a striking transformation.

"Why, damme, sir, you look twenty years younger!" exclaimed the landlord.

"Do I? By my faith, then, here's a gold piece to pay the transformer."

"I thank you, sir," said the landlord; "but I'd gladly have done it for the love of the thing."

"Thank you," said David. "Now, leave me, please, while I dress myself in my new clothes."

David had not yet worn the best suit which the friendly London merchant had introduced to him in Eastcheape. It was a handsome suit of satin, almost fit for a Court costume, and not unlike the one in which David had impressed Queen Elizabeth; not, of course, so showy, nor so rich; but it was a costume for a young man; and there was a rapier with it, and a baldrick. The tailor had suggested this latter addition, out of respect to the newest fashion.

"After all," said David, to himself, as he contemplated his leg, less shapely than of yore, and surveyed his general appearance by the aid of a few inches of mirror, "I am only forty-five; many a man does not elect to seek a wife until he is that age, and some don't marry until they are fifty. She is little more than forty, and, as Sutton says, might be thirty. I think she is more beautiful than ever she was. More staid; that's for the better. There is more of her; that's none for the worse. She is more thoughtful, less flighty, has a richer voice, and is, as ever, all that is desirable. Oh, my God, to think of the years I have lost! . . . But if she will not speak her mind to me even twenty years younger, as Sutton declares me! . . . Then, by heaven, I'll throw myself into the sea!"

Thereupon David went downstairs.

"Mistress! Dame Sutton!" shouted old Sutton. "Come hither! Didst ever see the like! Why, in God's name, who be it?"

"Who?" said the dame, adjusting her spectacles. "Why, 'tis David Yarcombe—that's who it be!"

"My dear old soul!" exclaimed David, "I thank you. Let me kiss you."

"And 'twas he, all the time!" said Sutton. "Always swore I'd seen mun before. But, body o' me, who the devil was to know him in a mask, and with the clothes of an old man to boot! By the Lord, we are in for great times at Littleham! . . . Do you know, sir, that your cousin hath lately been suing for possession of your estate, as the rightful heir under your father's will? . . . Not out of malice, not at all; for he's a decent, honest man, and rich. . . . But we'd all given you up; and——"

"Thank you, thank you, Sutton; tell me the rest this evening, over a pipe. . . . I have an engagement that I am anxious to keep. . . . Good-bye, for the present, dame. You have made me very happy. I was afraid she might not know me; she did not, half an hour ago."

He strode out of the old inn, and across the road and through the gate that led to the dear old Tudor house of the Withycombes, with the proud and confident step of a hopeful wooer.

* * * * *

And Master Sidmouth Trevelion declared that, of all the ceremonies at which he had assisted during his long and adventurous life, none had given him greater satisfaction than the marriage of Lucy Withycombe to David Yarcombe, in the parish Church of Littleham.

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